Nationalism as a Social Imaginary: Negotiations of Social Signification and (Dis)Integrating Discourses in Britain, France and Poland

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NATIONALISM AS A SOCIAL IMAGINARY: NEGOTIATIONS OF SOCIAL SIGNIFICATION AND (DIS)INTEGRATING DISCOURSES IN BRITAIN, FRANCE AND POLAND

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***Warning**: Unless stated otherwise, all translations, figures and pictures are the present author's. Dates associated with political actors and historical heads of states refer respectively to their time in office and their exercise of power.*

– Introduction –

> "*We who are homeless* – Among Europeans today there is no lack of those who have the right to call themselves homeless in a distinctive and honourable sense […] We are unfavourably disposed towards all ideals that might make one feel at home in this fragile, broken time of transition; as for its 'realities', we don't believe they are *lasting*. The ice that still supports people today has already grown very thin; the wind that brings a thaw is blowing; we ourselves, we homeless ones, are something that breaks up the ice and other all too thin 'realities'... We 'conserve' nothing; neither do we want to return to any past; we are by no means 'liberal'; we are not working for 'progress'; we don't need to plug our ears to the market-place's sirens of the future. […] No, we do not love humanity; but on the other hand we are not nearly 'German' enough, in the sense in which the word 'German' is constantly used nowadays, to advocate nationalism and racial hatred and to be able to take pleasure in the national scabies of the heart and blood poisoning with which European peoples nowadays delimit and barricade themselves against each other as if with quarantines. For that, we are too uninhibited, too malicious, too spoiled, also too well-informed, to 'well-travelled' […]. We who are homeless are too diverse and racially mixed in our descent, as 'modern man', and consequently we are not inclined to participate in the mendacious racial self-admiration and obscenity that parades in Germany today as a sign of a German way of thinking and that is doubly false and indecent among the people of the 'historical sense'. In a word – and let this be our word of honour – we are *good Europeans*, the rich heirs of millenia of European spirit, with too many provisions but also too many obligations."[1]

The immoral, anti-modern (truly post-modern?) disclaimer by Friedrich Nietzsche in *The Gay Science* evokes the essence of its time. To the scholar in the field of study of nations and nationalism, it appears indeed as an "untimely" text about a reality that, despite Nietzsche's prediction it would not last, is still part of our contemporaneity. The "homes" Nietzsche refers to in the qualification of "homeless"

1 Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science, With a Prelude in German Rhymes and an Appendix of Songs*, Bernard Williams [ed.], Josefine Nauckhoff, Adrian Del Caro [trans.], Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 2001 [1887], pp. 241-242

are to be understood as homelands.[2] This text was written by a philosopher who tried to blow the "winds that bring thaw" in living across the homelands – literal and literary – of most of his contemporaries while at the same time looking for alter-egos: *Others* similarly living as cross-borders.[3] More than a century later, the ice of the nationalist boundaries, which appeared thin to Nietzsche, has turned into a solid background of modernity.

A Very Late Modernity

Nietzsche's imprecation could have been written a century later. But for a more accurate suggestion, and regardless of the particular and somewhat peculiar style and tone of the text, some formal details would need to be contextualised. For example, liberalism, as a dominant ideology, was thriving at the time of Nietzsche State-based liberalism came to be known as liberal democracy.[4] After two world wars, the liberal democratic model established itself as the model of western modernity. But in the past thirty years, the ideological *status quo* and the interactions between these two dominant ideologies, liberalism and democracy, which had been negotiated in the decades after the Second World War, have been disrupted by the rise of the neoliberal ideology. The balance between liberalism and democracy elaborated during these *Trentes Glorieuses* ("the Glorious Thirty) – as the three decades of relative prosperity which followed the Second World War are referred to in France – have been transformed into a more spectacular approach to politics centred around ideas of economic liberalisation.

After the collapse of the Soviet block, little has remained of the pseudo communist regimes which stood as symbolic barriers to the global spread of liberalised

2 The original title of the aphorism 377 of *The Gay Science* is 'Wir Heimatlosen' which literally translates into "We who are homeless", but bears no ambiguity in German as it does in English. *Heimat* denotes clearly the home of the homeland – a place, literal or imagined, from where a person is native, originates from. "The homeless" in the sense of the persons who lack permanent housing would translate as *die Obdachlosen* in German.

3 Michel Onfray, *Contre-histoire de la philosophie. Vol. 14. Nietzsche* [audio conference], Paris, Frémeaux et Associés/Grasset, 2009.

4 "Democratic liberalism' would seem to fit better, as as far as the ideology and the practice goes, liberal democracy is a democratic compromise in favour of liberalism. See Francis Dupuis-Deri, "L'esprit antidémocratique des fondateurs de la«démocratie» moderne", *Agone*, no. 22, September 1999, pp. 95-113.

economy. China, for instance, is now more accurately described as a nationalist authoritarian capitalist state than as a communist popular republic – not that any such state lived up to its formal denomination. In the eerie balance between liberalism and democracy, after the collapse of the Soviet Block, change has come in the form of a new world disorder,[5] establishing the spectacle of neoliberalisation on the global stage.

But these processes of economic liberalisation, often described as neoliberalisation, have little in common with the ideological depth of liberalism. Historian David Harvey defines neoliberalisation as follows:

> "We can [...] interpret neoliberalization either as a *utopian* project to realize a theoretical design for the reorganization of international capitalism or as a *political* project to re-establish the conditions for capital accumulation and to restore the power of economic elites. […] the second of the objectives has in practice dominated."[6]

In this sense, what is described as neoliberalism is often contradictory and confusing. The contemporary political, social and economic imaginaries are still imbued with traditional modern ideologies – such as liberalism for instance. The confusing association of liberalism with processes of neoliberalisation point to the more general confusion which characterises the contemporary global disorder. In this context, the instrumentalisation of traditional ideological terms is widespread in political discourse and in elite discourses more generally.[7]

Three decades before the 2008 economic crisis, the neoliberal thought was being elaborated in the corners of western academia in opposition to the then dominating

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5 Amin Maalouf, *Le dérèglement du monde*, Paris, Grasset, 2009, p. 11.

6 David Harvey, *Neoliberalism, A Brief History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 19.

7 This is also what Thorsen Dag Einar suggests in "The Neoliberal Challenge - What is Neoliberalism?" *Contemporary Readings in Law and Social Justice*,Vol. 2, no. 2, 2010, pp. 15-41. Harvey argues in a similar direction: "The theoretical utopianism of neoliberal argument has, I conclude, primarily worked as a system of justification and legitimation for whatever needed to be done to achieve this goal. the evidence suggests, moreover, when neoliberal principles clash with the need to restore or sustain elite power, then the principles are either abandoned or become so twisted as to be unrecognizable. This in no way denies the power of ideas to act as a force for historical-geographical change. But it does point to a creative tension between the power of neoliberal ideas and the actual practices of neoliberalization that have transformed how global capitalism has been working over the last three decades." David Harvey, *Neoliberalism, A Brief History*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 19.

Keynesian paradigm of embedded economic liberalism.[8] Since then, with the enactment of neoliberal policies from the late 1970s onwards,[9] the rates of exchange of goods and capital have globally escalated, particularly after the walls of the Cold war collapsed in the early 1990s. Between 1995 and 2007, the European Union expanded from 12 to 27 members, creating the largest tax-free zone on the planet. New ways of consuming and acting have emerged as corollaries to processes of economic liberalisation, on the global and local scales, not necessarily in favour of the increase of social liberties. The citizens of the member states of the European Union have been granted the right of free movement. But this right does not equally concern all European citizens. Nationals of central and eastern European states have only gradually gained the possibility to travel and live in certain of the western European states.[10] Some walls have collapsed, but other walls have been maintained and further erected; between people who are favoured by the free movement of capital and those who are constrained by the outflow of capital; between those who had already been enjoying open borders and those who had been restrained behind the Iron Curtain. Twenty-first century modernity may present less quarantines that in the late nineteenth century – although for Europe, the quarantine has simply expanded to fortress Europe – but it has certainly plugged its ears to the sirens of the market.

The Significance of Nationalism

The new lifestyles of contemporary modernity are also reflected in the fast paced technological evolutions which characterise the spectacle of consumer society. The older generations in the first decades of the twenty-first century where born at a time when television did not exist. Their grandchildren can today access television on

8 Harvey dates the emergence of neoliberal thought back to the formation of the Mont Pelerin Society in 1947, whose members prominent members were Friedrich Von Hayek, Ludvig Von Mises, Milton Friedman and even at some point, Karl Popper. Harvey, *Neoliberalism*, pp. 19-21.

9 Notably by Ronald Reagan in the United States, Margaret Thatcher in the United Kingdom and François Mitterand in France, see Harvey, *Neoliberalism*, pp. 23-31.

10 While Britain, along with Ireland and Sweden, opened their borders to the citizens of those states which joined in 2004, most of other western states, such as France or Germany, have only gradually granted equal rights to citizens of the new member states.

their cells phones. The constantly changing new means of organisation and communication participate in the generalised feeling of volatility associated with late modernity. In a deeper sense, they also contribute to the formation of new imaginings across and about the world. Since the 1990s, the most prominent of these means has certainly been the World Wide Web. To be connected through a seemingly endless network, and sending fluxes of information or capital with an unprecedented ease even from a home desk, it certainly seems as if no walls are being reproduced on the 'Web', that they are *virtually* gone. But even on what is certainly the most open of means of communication, symbolic walls are also represented. For example, most major free web-mail providers offer a localised service, or to be more precise, a *nationalised* service. The default offer provides the user with a national suffix to his or her email address. Other examples are online social networks or gaming websites, where one of the first pieces of information alongside a person's name or nickname is their geopolitical localisation in the form of a country's name or flag.[11] This is of course harmless as such. In fact, it has certainly become the most basic information necessary to make sense of a globalised world where boundaries seem to have become liquid.[12]

This permeating national imaginary has for a time been considered to have been weakened by the recent economic liberalisation. But the widespread and frequent manifestations of nationalism since the end of the Cold War, some of which are the subject of this study, point to the ongoing fundamental significance of the national imaginary. As we read in Nietzsche's quote, nationalism was already a dominant ideology in the late nineteenth century which, decades before the rise of Nazism, and was already defined along lines of racial hatred and xenophobia. Nietzsche talks about its manifestation in Germany, but he could just as well have talked about any of the liberal democracies. Even if considered a less extreme form of nationalism in comparison to Nazism, nineteenth century liberal democracies appear in Nietzsche's

11 Once again, this a default setting of social and gaming websites which can be customised in certain instances.

12 In reference to Zygmunt Bauman's famous metaphor for Post-Modernity. See Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity,* Cambridge, Polity, 2000.

mind to be breaking the cosmopolitan vision of a world perceived across lines of difference.[13]

State-centred nationalism, which is the main focus of this work, has continuously been reproduced in the processes of democratisation and liberalisation of the past two centuries. These corresponding significations, as it is implied in Harvey's explanation of the processes of neoliberalisation, provide a purpose for nationalism to be reproduced in the eyes of political and economic elites. This reproduction, or rather the promotion of state nationalism, also operates in a dialectical relationship to popular demands for political and symbolical recognition. This relationship does nevertheless not explain the historical reason of nationalism; it simply locates its significance in late modernity. As far as the history of nationalism is concerned, the historical invention or formation of nationalism, and its uses and abuses, suggest that nationalism breeds on the wider social and historical context of the various moments of late modernity. It is a fluctuating form between a political doctrine and a social imaginary. The spacial and temporal fluctuations of nationalism make it a discursive field *par excellence.* Nationalism was already a global discursive formation long before neoliberalism became significant.[14] Yet, the contemporary significance of nationalism should not be interpreted as more (or less) important. Rather, if a recent discursive formation such as neoliberalism already presents us with a confusing complexity, the true extent of the significations of nationalism may consequently be unfathomable. This should nevertheless not prevent us from engaging with it to gain a critical perspective on one of the foundational threads of our contemporary imaginaries, keeping the limitations of our insights in mind.

The aim of the present study is to investigate nationalism by taking into consideration its transhistorical significance as a continuously reproduced dominant

13 The expression “across lines of difference” is borrowed from Craig Calhoun [ed.], *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity,* Oxford, Blackwell, 1994, p. 329.

14 On an inquiry on the original development of nationalism outside Europe, see Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism.* London. Verso. 1983. Otherwise, the formulation of colonies gaining independence in a process of national liberation suggests the further spread of nationalism around the globe and its discursive presupposition.

discursive formation of late modern social imaginaries. The structure of the work is elaborated around two epistemological angles. The first one is concerned with the elucidation of the critical and historically localised rationality about nationalism and contemporary social imaginaries in Europe. The second angle is concerned with the clarification of the *modus operandi* of nationalism as a social imaginary, through an exploration of historical and contemporary illustrations – or *texts* – drawn primarily from the discursive and actual spaces of Britain, France and Poland. Although these two angles are elaborated dialectically, the first two chapters focus on the elucidation and parallel elaboration of a *logos* to approach the interpretation of the fragments of the *cosmos* of national imaginaries analysed in the remaining two chapters.

Logos

The questions which have motivated this study can be formulated as follows: how, and thus partly why, is nationalism being reproduced in contemporary social imaginaries in Europe as a dominant political signification? The question could be rephrased with a normative angle: in spite of the 'banalisation' of nationalism which has been observed in established nation-states, does the national imaginaries of European societies run the risk of reproducing the totalitarian character which the common sense use of the term 'nationalism' generally refers to?[15] The different terms and notions contained in these questions need to be clarified before engaging in setting a framework for the further analysis of nationalism. The first aspect to elaborate is consequently the comprehension of nationalism, not only primarily as a political doctrine or principle,[16] but as a feature of modern social imaginaries, as *mode* of imagining modern societies, or in other words, *nations*.[17]

Common sense definitions of nationalism compared to those elaborated in the academic field of the study of nations and nationalism are the starting point of the critical inquiry of the first chapter. This inquiry aims at getting a wider sense of how

15 *Banalisation* is used here in the sense elaborated by Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, London, Sage, 1995. See Chapetr 1, Part 2.3 of the present work.

16 See Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, London, Blackwell, 2006 [1983], p. 1.

17 In the terms used by Benedict Anderson, as “imagined communities”, hence imagined in a particular way. Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, pp. 5-7.

nationalism is being described and analysed and to set the basis of a framework to make sense of the complexity of nationalism. This step leads to a critical evaluation of our own perspective, as we do not speak from beyond national imaginaries and as such reproduce part of its discourse, not the least by designing its significance. In order to further this critical assessment, it is necessary to overview some of the theories which will enlighten our understanding of nationalism.

The second chapter aims at elaborating an open theory for the analysis of the illustrations which will constitute the focus of the two remaining chapters. Nationalism has been described in academic theories a discursive formation in the Foucauldian sense.[18] Foucault elaborated a concept of discourse which while referring to basic cultural functions, involved an intricate conceptualisation which will partly be clarified as the starting point in the elaboration of a theoretical framework. In order to consider the social imaginary as a space of inquiry, the relation between nationalism as a discursive formation and the space of the social imaginary needs to be laid out. The thread of discourse as it is analysed in the first sections of the second chapter, appear as a way to make sense of the labyrinthine complexity of nationalism engaged with in the first chapter. Starting from the elucidation of discourse and related notions, the framework is further consolidated in clarifying the relationship between formal expressions and social significations which is situated in the space of the social imaginary. We present a logical cosmology of the social imaginary which aims at organising the intersections of the various threads brought in during the elaboration of the framework. The transdisciplinary character of this elaboration appeared as necessary to make sense of the cultural complexity of the formation and reproduction of social significations, and consequently of nationalism. The methodological strategy aims at putting 'things' in relation or in correlation, through their concurrent action or reaction, expecting that the analysis will still leave open interpretative spaces for elements which were omitted. This study is not an attempt to list all the components of the

18 Craig Calhoun, *Nationalism*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, p. 4.

complexity of the social imaginary of nationalism, but to elucidate at least part of the nebulae it constitutes.

Cosmos

The logical cosmology is thus the expression of the localised perspective from which the social and historical texts of the British, French and Polish imagined communities will be analysed in the subsequent chapters. The third chapter proposes a fragmentary inquiry into the complexity of the histories of nationalism as a social modern imaginary in Britain, France and Poland. This inquiry into social-historical cosmologies informs and verifies the *logos* elaborated in the second chapter. It further inquires into the formation of the social-historical ensembles of Britain, France and Poland which are often presented as model formations of nationalism. While this is more evidently the case for Britain and France given their prominence in traditional discourses on nations and nationalism, the case of Polish nationalism redefines the significance of Britain and France through its concurrent and particular formation. This suggests that the centrality of Britain or France is relative and needs to be put into perspective. But more significantly, we observe that it is *across* national imaginary borders that the representations of 'identity' and 'otherness' have and are being discursively formed and reproduced.[19]

The history written in the third chapter could appear as an expression of a European history. But it appears as such due to the necessary epistemological limitations. The framework established as loosely European appears to be sufficiently inclusive to express the diversity of nationalism which, although produced in the region of Europe, has become globally reproduced. Its global spread allows the consideration of nationalism as a signification of a global imaginary. If anything, nationalism should be considered as the both having contributed to the successes and excesses of what could be referred to as the European modern civilisation. A point of departure is nothing more than a point. Even if in the historical narration it may seem to

19 Although we would like to argue against 'models', for arguments in favour of considering the case of Polish nationalism as a model, see Roman Szporluk, *Communism and Nationalism, Karl Marx versus Friedrich List*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988, pp. 84-85.

express the significations it allowed *a posteriori*, it did not express most of them *a priori.*

The analysis focuses on contextualised negotiations of nationalist significations and the selection of texts has no pretension to be exhaustive, but was motivated by how representative and enlightening of social and historical negotiations of social significations related to nationalism these illustrations could be. The historical sections of the third chapter attempt to comprehend the interactions of social significations which have participated in establishing national imaginaries in its developments as a state-centred ideology. The idea of national liberation appears as having been the leitmotiv of nationalists since their original formation as opponents of established orders. In contrast, the contemporary sections in the fourth chapter, which focus is the reproduction of nationalism in the years 2004-2009 in the three nation-states mentioned above, first present an analysis of the discursive promotion of nationalism by mainstream political actors. This promotion expresses a negotiation in favour of a culturalist management of contemporary social issues concurrent with policies of securitisation and a more general *droitisation des esprits* (reactionary shift to the right). These elements characterises the dominant political 'mood' in Europe which followed the wind of change brought by the collapse of the Soviet Block. While this reactionary shift may be associated with the ageing of European populations, illustrations focusing on popular expressions of nationalism, which are contrasted to the preceding analyses of political discourses, show a more complex picture of the significance of nationalism and its potential for social and political exclusion in contemporary issues related to belonging. The final part of the fourth chapter inquires the extent to which the exclusionary element of nationalism and maybe nationalism in general, can be transcended by looking into alternative illustrations in both academic and popular discourses, moving away from the centre and focusing of the margins of national imaginaries.

Answers to the questions which have motivated this study will nevertheless appear as localised and fragmentary as the study itself. The issue whether the ongoing reproduction of nationalism can still fester extreme forms of exclusion is in itself a

historically localised issue even if it suggests a critical judgement about the contemporary signification of nationalism. But as historian Norman Davies writes:

> "In the last analysis, of course, differences of opinion about the ethics of nationalism cannot be resolved. Like Democracy or Autocracy, Nationalism in itself is neither virtuous nor vicious. It can only be judged in relation to the particular motives of its particular adherents. According to circumstances, it has been espoused both by noble idealists and also by scoundrels for whom the means is an end in itself."[20]

In the light of the perspicacity of Davies's description, this study aims more humbly to be a rational lay out of the path of the present author in his inquiry into the fabric of national imaginaries.

20 Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland. Volume II: 1795 to the Present*, [Revised Edition], Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 4-5.

– Overture –
De Labyrintho

> "[...] its nucleus […] is a regular maze in which without a clue, one may wander indefinitely up innumerable blind alleys and in interminable vicious circles, or one may picture it as a deep-sea octopus with tentacles twisting away through the obscurity, an obscurity which it increases at critical moments with floods of self-secreted ink. […] [T]he clue to the maze, the motive of the drama, the key that gives meaning to the cipher, is 'nationalism'"[21]

While nationalism may appear to be a simple answer to intricate questions, or at least so it seemed a century ago, trying to disentangle the cobweb in which one is ensnared when entering the realm of nations and nationalism in the first decade of the twenty-first century turns out to be a daunting task. Faced with such a dazzling predicament, one asks oneself what is the key to nationalism?

A warning should be heeded: I do not propose to provide the reader with a key for the disentanglement of this cobweb. In a more humble attempt, the following study presents some portions of the cobweb's maze in which sense could be made. Thus, some minor keys for the unravelling of certain threads may be found, which for some, have already shifted or ceased to exist. They nevertheless prove useful for the continuous decryption of our social imaginaries.

One generally makes sense of one's (intellectual) peregrinations from the position one has in history, in one's own story, and with the sensitivity of a historical moment. While a higher ground is always helpful and more than advisable to gain a wider viewpoint, I do not pertain to achieve a higher ground beyond my own historical moment. But higher grounds never come easy or as expected: bold is the person who claims he did not lose his way.

21 George Young and Leonard Henry Courtney, *Nationalism and War in the Near East*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1915, p.1.

– Chapter 1 –
Entering the Maze of Nationalism

– Part 1 –
Approaching Nationalism

1. Selected Manifestations of Nationalism in Europe since 1989

Nationalism – vast and ramified as most '-isms' are – is defined both by the standpoint from which it is studied as well as by the objects through which it is studied.[22] Decades of studies have answered many questions about nationalism, but it would not be an exaggeration to say that they have raised at least as many. After the collapse of the Soviet block, many expectations – social, political, theoretical, or even epistemological – were that a new and better world would be formed. In this idyllic picture of a world at last united and finally free of ideology, nationalism – seen as one the of backward ideologies of the past – was consequently bound to be on the decline.[23]

History unfolded in a different direction. While dreams of a positive globalisation were being upheld, others exerted different dreams, which in certain cases turned out to be nightmares. In a reckless and neglectful failure of memory, the joyous cosmopolitans and the many others who were celebrating the new horizons had forgotten that 'independence', 'democracy' and 'self-determination' come at a price and have rarely – if ever, in modern times – been found outside a nationalist framework.

This omission can partly be explained by the erroneous idea that communism had resolved the question of nationalities. Although one could argue that from a theoretical point of view such a prospect would have been more than desirable, as

22 The formula “vast and ramified” is borrowed from John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (Eds), *Nationalism*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1994, p. 3.

23 The thesis of the “end of ideology” was first appeared in the 1960's with Daniel Bell's *The End of Ideology: On the Exhaustion of Political Ideas in the Fifties*, Glencoe, Ill., New Press, 1960, before being popularised again in the 1990's.

far as 'real socialism' went, nationalism was painstakingly involved.[24] Even if the organisation of the USSR was that of an empire, Russian nationalism retained the political, cultural and economic hegemony, which is carried on to this day.[25] Moving further away from geographical Europe, the case of the Popular Republic of China is also enlightening in this respect as its leaders have consistently followed a Jacobin state formation imbued with nationalism. Nationalism in China renewed itself following the internal legitimacy crisis that led to the second Tiananmen square massacre in 1989 and was further fuelled by the collapse of the Soviet Union and its related ideology. This further demonstrates the central and voluntary role nationalism played and still plays in the so-called communist regimes.[26]

Thus, the last decade of the twentieth century came as a dire reminder that nationalism is here to stay as it filled in the void between dreams and the at times dreary, at others lively, reality of the post-Cold war world. History did not come to

24 The ontological turning point from ideal socialism to real socialism happened after Stalin dropped the idea of a world revolution in favour of "socialism in one country" (between 1924 and 1926, eventually becoming state policy). Furthermore, the satellite states were organised in nation-state-like entities, with their own borders, flags, anthems and languages, thus retaining all the symbols and the cultural productions of nationalism (state sovereignty being evidently left aside). The fifteen union republics which constituted the Soviet Union (including the Russian republic) have since 1991 all pursued the recognition of a nationality in building their state institutions. See Ronald Grigor Suny, *The Revenge of the Past: Nationalism, Revolution, and the Collapse of the Soviet Union*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1993; Marcin Zaremba, *Komunizm, legitymizacja, nacjonalizm: Nacjonalistyczna legitymizacja władzy komunistycznej w Polsce* [Communism, Legitimisation, Nationalism: Nationalist Legitimisation of the Communist Power in Poland], Warsaw, Trio, 2001.

25 Since 2007, the Kremlin under Vladimir Putin's and Dmitry Medvedev's rule has promoted a patriotic rewriting of Russian history through new uniform history textbooks which downplay the horrors of the Soviet period and even rationalise Stalin's crimes. The deputy head of the Duma's constitutional law committee, Irina Yarovaya, supported the project saying "We need a united society. We need a united textbook" making the obvious political design look like an evidence (quoted in Miriam Elder, "Set text seeks Soviet 'glories'", in *The Guardian Weekly,* 25.06.2010, p.12; see also Shaun Walker, "Vladimir Putin rewrites Russia's history books to promote patriotism", in *The Independent*, 20.08.2007).

26 See Suisheng Zhao, "A state-led nationalism: The patriotic education campaign in post-Tiananmen China", *Communist and Post-Communist Studies,* Volume 31, Issue 3, September 1998, p.287-302.

an end.[27] Even if certain ideologies had waned, history unstoppably carried on, and in many instances "nationalism reigned supreme."[28]

The formation, re-formation or re-institution of independent states from the Soviet sphere of influence applied the core doctrine of nationalism – "one state, one people" – and maybe even furthered the traditional pattern of nation-state formation.[29] The obvious examples are the formation of new states from the break-up of borders established during the Second World War. While the break-up of Czechoslovakia presented the world with a peaceful resolution of nationalist tensions,[30] Yugoslavia was on its way towards its 'Balkanization' plunging into an announced civil war.[31] The former coalition of South Slavic peoples became the dramatic locus which Europe and the world contemplated with awe as ethnic and religious strife turned into war and ethnic cleansing. In July 1995, the atrocities

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27 In spite of the repeated claims of Francis Fukuyma in "The End of History?", *The National Interest 16*, Summer 1989 and *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York, Free Press, 1992. After having been the proponent of a messianic and uncritical linear history of democracy and capitalism which have fuelled neoconservatism in the United States throughout the 1990's, Fukuyama has tried to distance himself from what finally appeared to be a misinformed path, to say the least. See Anatol Lieven, "The Two Fukuyamas", *The National Interest Online*, 01.06.2010, retrieved 05.11.2009: <http://www.nationalinterest.org/Article.aspx?id=10332>. Ironically, albeit wrongly, others were stating the opposite, e.g. Misha Glenny, *The Rebirth of History: Eastern Europe in the Age of Democracy*, London, Penguin Books, 1990.

28 Norman M. Naimark, in the foreword to Suny, *The Revenge of the Past*, p. ix.

29 Many commentators have described the upsurge of nationalist fervour in Central and Eastern Europe as "ethnic" nationalism opposed to the more "civic" nationalism of Western states, reviving the old opposition between Eastern and Western nationalisms (describing the nationalisms of Germany and France respectively in their development up to the Second World War). Although this categorisation posits more questions that it resolves, the fact that Western commentators found the need to ascribe a category to the phenomena they were observing may show their surprise, their ideological contempt (as in this dual categorisation, "ethnic" is a negative qualifier) and more importantly, the significance of these phenomena. The question of the categorisation of various types of nationalisms is discussed further below.

30 On 25 November 1992, the Federal Assembly of Czechoslovakia agreed on its dissolution. On 31 December 1992 the Czech and Slovak Federative Republic was effectively dissolved leaving the ground for the Czech Republic and Slovakia, formally created on 1 January 1993. They are the only two states amongst those joining the European Union in 2004 and 2007 which had been reformed after the collapse of the Eastern Block.

31 "Division of a multinational state into smaller ethnically homogeneous entities. The term also is used to refer to ethnic conflict within multiethnic states. It was coined at the end of World War I to describe the ethnic and political fragmentation that followed the breakup of the Ottoman Empire, particularly in the Balkans. (The term *Balkanization* is today invoked to explain the disintegration of some multiethnic states and their devolution into dictatorship, ethnic cleansing, and civil war.)" From the entry "Balkanization", *Encyclopædia Britannica 2010*, retrieved 09.06.2010: <http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/50323/Balkanization>

taking place in former Yugoslavia hit a nadir, the horror of which many believed to have been buried in history.[32] On "the edge of the sleepy and peaceful European Union",[33] more than 8,000 Muslim Bosnian men and boys were murdered by the Bosnian Serb Army in Srebrenica during a campaign which cost the lives of about 30,000 civilians in the region.[34] Shortly after, the armed conflict drew to an end, but it wasn't long before another series of conflicts were triggered. From 1998 to 1999, tensions between communities living in Serbia and Kosovo once again slid into armed conflict.

In the following decade, as the international community was focusing much of its attention on bringing peace to the region and international courts were judging perpetrators of war crimes, the Balkans – theatrically, yet less dramatically – were carrying on breaking-up. On 3 June 2006, Montenegro which had been part of all the unions with Serbia declared its independence following the 21 May 2006 referendum. On 17 February 2008, Kosovo, which had been an autonomous province of Serbia, declared its independence after weeks of unrest. The unrest did not turn into a bloodbath, but the Serbian state refused to recognise the independence of Kosovo.[35]

In the aftermath of the Yugoslav wars, the geopolitical map of the Balkans showed a radically different picture from the one it had during the Cold War. Each of the seven self-recognised states making up the former Yugoslavia developed new discourses

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32 In fact, the mass massacres perpetuated during the wars in former Yugoslavia had been the largest in Europe since the Second World War. Although atrocities of many but also of a similar kind had been and were being perpetuated outside Europe (one obvious instance being the Rwandan Genocide in 1994), candid Europeans stood in disbelief in front of the atrocities.

33 Michael White, "Revulsion and pain are agents of change", in *The Guardian Weekly*, 18.06.2010, p.14.

34 In 2004, the Srebrenica massacre was ruled as genocide by the International Criminal Tribunal for the former Yugoslavia in The Hague. For additional information on the Srebrenica massacre and the war in former Yugoslavia, see e.g. the website of the *Genocide Studies Program* at Yale University: <http://www.yale.edu/gsp/former_yugoslavia/index.html> [last accessed on 30.05.2010]

35 By summer 2010, 69 states had formally recognised the Republic of Kosovo. Following a non-binding ruling by the ICJ on 22 July 2010 that Kosovo's declaration of independence did not violate general international law, Serbian President Boris Tadic declared that Serbia would never recognise its independence. A curious project associated to the government of Kosovo follows the international recognition of the Republic and lists them on its website to thank them: <http://www.kosovothanksyou.com/> [last accessed on 28.07.2010]

opposing both the national discourse of communist Yugoslavia as well as the re-imagined and burgeoning nationalist discourses of their neighbours, inside and outside the former federation. The most obvious examples are the creation of national symbols, such as flags or anthems. In February 2008, the brand new flag of Kosovo could suddenly be seen fluttering in the wind.

Another manifestation of state legitimising nationalism, both intriguing and yet derisory, is the development of the century old 'Macedonian question' that pitched Greece and the Republic of Macedonia in a conflict over national historical symbols and myths. After declaring its independence in November 1991, the Republic of Macedonia faced a symbolic conflict over its denomination:

> "The declaration set off a diplomatic, cultural, and international struggle over the recognition of the new state. Greece opposed recognition of the new state because of its use of the name "Macedonia" and engaged in intensive diplomatic efforts to prevent its recognition by the international community. At the heart of the dispute lies the thesis that the Republic is the official homeland of the Macedonian nation."[36]

Nearly twenty years since the struggle began, the story continues. The Greek state has consistently promoted a reconnection with the mythical Greece of antiquity as a way to distance itself from the Ottoman Empire. While this ongoing promotion may suggest insecurity over issues related to cultural heritage and identity, it is difficult to imagine a linear history which would link contemporary Greece to the Greece of antiquity apart from its denomination. In 2009, one of the official slogans of a promotional campaign by the Greek Tourism office was precisely: "Greece: 5000 years of history."[37] Such a timespan is hard to beat if longevity is the basis of legitimacy.

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36 Victor Roudometof, *Collective Memory, National Identity, and Ethnic Conflict: Greece, Bulgaria and the Macedonian Question*, London, Praeger, 2002, p.29.

37 See photographs in Annex 2.

Discourse on the issue in the Republic of Macedonia since the parliamentary elections of 2006 has drifted into a nationalist Greek-like reinvention.[38] The mirrored situation of Greece in the Republic of Macedonia may sound bitter and ironic, but this dispute is an example of the repetitive pattern of discourse used in state-based nationalist policies as well as the issue of the consequent appropriation of history by politicians. Mythical histories and lineages have always been used as means to legitimise a discourse, be it legal, political, religious or more broadly cultural. It is no less problematic than in the past to repeatedly turn bits and pieces of history into fabled ideological memory-histories, especially in an age when rationality is assumed to be the base of institutions and policies. But even a rational mind makes use of symbols, myths, and short-cuts, and if ill-informed, it will represent realities under a narrow and biased light. Common-sense understanding of nationalism usually falls under such a projection. The misguided self-confidence that a rational understanding of nationalism is immune from the use of symbols, myths and shortcuts is to be discussed in the following chapter.

2. Typologies and Binary Oppositions

A common-sense understanding of what nationalism can be taken from the use of the word 'nationalist' by mainstream media or political actors. What is usually referred to in mainstream discourse as 'nationalist' is the marginal or foreign promotion of radical ideologies, often linked to racism or xenophobia or extremism; in other words, far-right political ideologies, of which the official forefront are parties such as the British National Party (BNP) in the United Kingdom or the Front National (FN) in France. The scope of the term 'nationalist' also extends to independentist or separatist organisations, which, although they may less often be linked to racism or xenophobia as such, are nonetheless associated with sometimes violent anti-state and anti-establishment tactics – even if this association reduces the

38 "[…] Macedonia, under the nationalist government, has embarked on a misguided project of "antiquisation", or appropriation of ancient Macedonian figures and symbols as the foundation of the modern Macedonian identity. Skopje's Petrovec airport was renamed Alexander the Great airport in 2006. A plan has long been mooted to build a 40-metre Alexander statue in Skopje's main public square […]." Ivo Petkovski, "Macedonia and Greece: a very Balkan affair", in *The Guardian Weekly*, 02.07.2010, p.12.

diversity and does not recognise the generally increasing conventionality of a number of separatists movements.[39]

Nationalists are not only portrayed within Western European nations as existing on the margins of those nations, but the nationalist, according to such discourse, is also to be found leading the nation on the margins of the European continent. The selected manifestations of nationalism presented in the previous section have all evoked the idea of nationalism as an exception to the rule, to the western European liberal-democratic model. They confirm the general understanding that nationalism is the overt and atavistic celebration of the nation, linked to extreme-right wing politics. But less extreme politics are similarly nationalist politics, and not merely 'national' in a geopolitical and descriptive sense. They also promote representations of the unity between state and society, especially in so called established nation-states, which is generally considered to be the form of most states in western Europe.[40]

The alignment of the state and nation in Western European states is generally overlooked as nationalism at work and the nationalist is generally assumed to be a person for whom the nation is the absolute reference. All the other elements of the world-view of such a nationalist are subjected to the paramount position of the nation. Indeed, such a view reaches to definitions of ultra-nationalism, or even of

39 Regional separatists organisations such as ETA for the Basque country in France and Spain have regularly been hitting the headlines with terrorist acts, usually against state institutions such as the police or official buildings. Yet, the cases of Catalan, Breton, Welsh or Scottish separatist movements, to name but a few, cannot be simply equated with terror actions. In many cases, a fringe of radical separatists have perpetrated acts of violence, but many are organised in associations or political parties that increasingly look alike the traditional national parties, e.g. the Scottish National Party (SNP), which has in recent years enacted policies closer to what would be expected from the Labour party than from the BNP.

40 See Michael Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, London, Sage Publications, 1995, pp.5-7.

integral nationalism,[41] where the world-view is held in a holistic pseudo-rationality which erases all incoherence and contradictions to celebrate whatever the nation is supposed to be. Ironically, striving not to be essentialist, this view is actually an essentialist conception of nationalism which leaves the vast array of nationalist phenomena out of the picture.

This has informed the traditional academic typology consisting of an opposition between civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism, which was reconvened after 1989. This typology identifies a first type of nationalism that has been a positive integral force in the formation of western nation-states, which was followed by the current common-sense understanding of nationalism in the form of the second type, considered to be a ill-formed copy of the first. The developments after the collapse of the Soviet block in central and eastern Europe appeared as new and additional confirmations of the wrongdoings of what is also called *Eastern*, or organic nationalism as opposed to the original Western, liberal version.[42]

> "Like nationalism itself, [the contrast of ethnic to civic nationalism] seems almost natural, a reflection of reality rather than a construction of it. But while the distinction does grasp important aspects of modern history and contemporary politics, it does so in a specific way, shaping evaluations and perceptions, reinforcing some political projects, and prejudicing thinkers against others. And it was invented."[43]

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41 While I used it in a more generic way here, 'integral nationalism' is one of the five categories Carlton Hayes elaborated to define nationalism in *The Historical Evolution of Modern Nationalism*, New York, R.R. Smith, 1931. His other types were humanitarian nationalism, Jacobin nationalism, traditional nationalism and liberal nationalism. Hayes was referring to the "nationalisme intégral" of French nationalist Charles Maurras (1868-1952), ideologist of the *Action Française* – a traditionalist and counter-revolutionary movement launched in 1899 during the Dreyfus affair. To put it in a nutshell, integral nationalism is indeed a *fundamentalist* nationalist doctrine ("intégriste" in French), which Hayes links to fascism and totalitarianism, that places the nation above all else, considering it an organic entity, a symbiosis of blood and soil. See Calhoun, *Nations Matter*, p.145.

42 There is a formal correspondence of civic nationalism with the common-sense notion of patriotism in the sense that both are considered in there respective binary oppositions as morally positive notions. In this regard, and leaving any differences aside, patriotism is to nationalism what civic nationalism is to ethnic nationalism.

43 Craig Calhoun, *Nations Matter: Culture, History, and the Cosmopolitan Dream*, London, Routledge, 2007, p.117 and "Introduction to the Transaction Edition" in Hans Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism: A Study in its Origins and Background*, New Brunswick, Transaction, 2008 [originally New York, Macmillan, 1944], p.ix.

This typology first came into existence to contrast the English and French nationalisms, which were traditionally considered to be based on the political principle of citizenship, from German nationalism, considered to be based on blood ties. From this perspective, national-socialism appears to be the uttermost expression of German nationalism, as argued by Hans Kohn, one of the first scholars to have written about nationalism and whose civic/ethnic typology has been the most influential.[44] This typology was taken up in 1993 by Michael Ignatieff in his book *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*.[45] Ignatieff distinguishes the two types of nationalism in the way they construe the nature of belonging to the nation. The two concepts of nationalism and nation have therefore two distinct meanings, while they both identify the nation as the primary form for human societies.

In the case of civic nationalism, state and society are based on the rule of law: all citizens are equal and share the civic and political values, independently of the colour of their ethnic particularities. A colour-, creed-, and culture-blind formation, although not gender-blind, is closely related to republican ideas and especially to the notion of *laicité* (secularism). Ignatieff places the emergence of this type of nationalism in the late eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century. The civic type of nationalism is linked to the formation of nation-states based on liberal political principles. Kohn identifies eighteenth century Britain as the first case of a nation which was justified by a "rational societal conception",[46] holding the ethnically different English, Scottish and Welsh people together. Appealing as it may be, this presentation leaves the fundamental imperialist essence of Britain out of the

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44 Apart from *The Idea of Nationalism*, New York, Macmillan, 1944, Kohn developed his typology in other works, such as *A History of Nationalism in the East*, New York, Harcourt Brace, 1929, "The Eve of German Nationalism" in *Journal of the History of Ideas*, Volume 12, no. 2, 1951, pp. 6-84, or *Prelude to Nation-States: The French and German Experience, 1789-1815*, Princeton, Van Nostrand, 1967. For a critical introduction to Kohn's approach to nationalism, see Craig Calhoun, "Inventing the opposition of ethnic and civic nationalism: Hans Kohn and *The Idea of Nationalism*" in Calhoun, *Nations Matter*, pp.117-146.

45 Michael Ignatieff, *Blood and Belonging: Journeys into the New Nationalism*, London, BBC Books, 1993.

46 Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, p. 331.

picture, which actually functioned as one of the founding national bonds.[47] This explains, for instance, the dominance of English elites and the somewhat passionate interests of Scottish elites for the new prospects brought about by the empire.

The second type of nationalism, ethnic nationalism, is based on the symbiosis of the nation made up of the people and the nation as a state. The people, the *ethnie* as Anthony D. Smith would put it,[48] are thus considered a natural and pre-political ethnic community which coming of age, as the Hegelian vision goes, forms a nation-state.[49] The example of Germany is the traditional example of a state nationalism that bases belonging to the nation on ethnic ties. In the formation of the German nation-state, citizenship was, according to Kohn, replaced by "the infinitely vaguer concept of 'folk'."[50]

Kohn, who avoids equating ethnic nationalism to traditional and atavistic loyalties the way Ignatieff does, relates it to a different intellectual branch of an anti-liberal challenge to civic nationalism:

> "The idea of nationalism, in Kohn's view, developed specifically in the West as part of the pursuit of a social order based on reason and universal justice. It was central to liberalism and liberalism was central to it – until it was appropriated and transformed, mainly in the East, by Romantics, traditionalists, mystical irrationalists, and those pursuing a different *raison d'état* governed not by universal ideals but by the desire to claim an equal or even dominant place in the world remade by the West."[51]

Yet, despite all the caution in defining ethnic nationalism, Kohn places the contrast between the two types of nationalism on a moral ground between idealised types of social projects. Nationalism as a historical phenomenon, even when considered contrived to a given society or a given state, presents itself – even philosophically –

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47 Linda Colley, *Britons: Forging the Nation 1707-1837*, [2nd ed.]Yale University Press, New Haven, 2005 [1992], p. 8. This is further elaborated in the course of the third chapter of the present work.

48 Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity*, London, Penguin, 1991, see Chapter 2.

49 "Nations may have had a long history before they finally reach their destination – that of forming themselves into states." Georg Wolfgang Friedrich Hegel, *Lectures on the Philosophy of World History*, trans. H.N. Nisbet, Cambridge University Press Cambridge, 1975, p.134. Quoted in Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, London, Blackwell, 2006 [1983], p.47.

50 Kohn, *The Idea of Nationalism*, p. 331. One could ask what about the concept of 'people', '*peuple*' in French.

51 Calhoun, *Nations Matter*, p. 118.

under more varied and less consistent standards. Without digging too deeply in the components of nationalism in the exemplary cases of Britain or France, elements of atavism, traditionalism and romanticism are plentiful. They may not appear as dominant as in other less "positive" cases (although this supposition is problematic in itself), but they are no less integral to nationalism both in particular and in general. The belief that political opinion of citizens has been informed independently of cultural or ethnic particularities and interests is a misconception nurtured by ideological prejudice and in turn still nurtures grand approaches to social projects. Jürgen Habermas, who has been promoting a European "constitutional patriotism", or in other words, a positively distilled cosmopolitan, liberal and democratic project, still writes about nationalism in the same terms:

> "The nation-state owes its historical success to the fact that it substituted relations of solidarity between citizens for the disintegrating corporative ties of early modern society. But the *republican achievement* is endangered when, conversely, the integrative force of the nation of citizens is traced back to the prepolitical fact of a quasi-natural people, that is, to something independent of and prior to the political opinion and will-formation of the citizens themselves."[52]

Habermas's formulation seems a bit clumsy as it suggests he acknowledge the existence of the 'natural' communities which the political (republican) nation replaced or ignored without the concurrent formation of a wider culture of its own. The possibility of a society based on ideals of equality and tolerance is obviously tantalising, but it is misguided by a moralist liberal reading of the history of nationalism, which, focusing on ideals and ideas, fails to take into account the wider ideological interrelations which render nationalism a protean form, however positive or negative. The civic/ethnic typology based on a moral contrast between the two is also a philosophical deadlock. While it is obvious that extreme nationalism is more than reprehensible, such a conceptualisation risks assuming that an idealised civic vision cannot fester some form of extremism – which is very questionable. Moreover, such an idealised vision does not allow the consideration that nationalism is to be considered as part of a particular historical moment, which explains the

52 Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, Cambridge, MA, MIT Press, 1998, p. 115.

tendency to de-contextualise. Proponents of this binary typology *de facto* follow – even if unwillingly and contradictorily – the Hegelian progressive and linear historical account of nations and nationalism, ultimately determined by a sophisticated sophism that dictates what nationalism *should* be or should have been.[53]

A critical understanding of nationalism is not only be beneficial to a general understanding of modern and contemporary times, but also to the devising of political theory. As an evident consequence of the protean form of nationalism, the academic field of study of nations and nationalism has presented a variety of theories which, more or less critically, attempt to make sense of the complexity of nationalism.[54] Some aspects of these theories will be discussed in the following section.

3. Approaches to Nationalism

The binary classification elaborated by Kohn was itself situated during the time of national-socialism, perhaps the foremost example of totalitarianism. In this respect, it can be assumed the classification was an attempt to make sense of a phenomenon which, as the most despicable form of nationalist ideology, could only be considered against the values it opposed and as morally wrong. This moment also marks the beginning of academia's growing interest in nationalism.

In *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, Umut Özkirimli presents a chronology of the study of nationalism in four stages.[55] The first one ranging from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century, when the idea of nationalism concerns

53 If involuntary, it can be put down to the certainly complex situation in which a critical stance towards something which is part of one's everyday reality often falls on sophistic conceptualisations. A lot of caution has to be taken to maintain a self-critical positioning and despite all efforts, failure often awaits *post hoc*.

54 For authoritative arguments against the civic/ethnic typology used to group specific cases, see Oliver Zimmer, "Boundary Mechanisms and Symbolic Resources: Towards a Process-Oriented Approach to National Identity" in *Nations and Nationalism* Volume 9, Issue 2, 2003, pp. 173-193; and Rogers Brubaker, *Ethnicity Without Groups*, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, 2004, Chapter 6.

55 Umut Özkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism: A Critical Introduction*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2000, presents the most thorough overview of theories of nationalism to date.

thinkers who have contributed to the development and spread of nationalism. The second stage is in fact the one when nationalism becomes a subject of academic inquiry. Özkirimli dates this stage from 1918 to 1945. The third stage, starting after World War 2, ends in the late 1980's when the fourth and present stage takes over. Up to the 1980's – during Özkirimli's third stage –, the academic debate diversified in terms of disciplinary interest and it is during this period that the most important modernist theories were formulated. The current stage, Özkirmli argues, is distinguishable from the previous as theories of nationalism formulated in the last two decades seem to share a common characteristic that was not present in the third stage. Namely, these theories attempt "to transcend the classical debate (characteristic of the third stage)" which was centred on the question of the origins of nations.[56] This chronology succeeds in highlighting the hallmarks of the dominant debates about nationalism. However, it consciously leaves little consideration for less prominent works, such as the aborted attempts by early sociologists to theorise the concept of nation,[57] or theories developed on the margin of international debates such as Rudolf Rocker's *Nationalism and Culture* originally published in 1936.[58] These works have contributed to the variety and the ramification of the possible understanding of nations and nationalism.

These remarks, falling short of criticising Özkirimli's achievement, are meant to put it in context. Even if minor works were taken into account, the chronology would probably need little or no adjustment. More importantly, by setting out to overview and assess theories of the now extensive field of nationalism, Özkirimli's work is in itself performative (and indeed a performance) of the fourth stage and the transcendence of classical theories. As will be discussed further below, one of the major questions concerning nations and nationalism is the question of their

56 Özkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism*, pp. 8-9.

57 E.g. Marcel Mauss, "La nation" in *Oeuvres 3: Cohésion sociale et division de la sociologie*. Paris, Editions de Minuit, 1969, pp. 573-625. Gérard Noiriel presents these developments in *Etat, nation et immigration*, Gallimard, Paris, 2001, see Chapter 3.

58 A work which was much ahead of its time: Rudolf Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, trans. Ray E. Chase, Black Rose Books, Montreal, 1998. To this, one could also add all the contributions of those thinkers, such as Franz Fanon who, as the field of study was undergoing a specialisation, did not formally write about nationalism: Franz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*, Paris, Editions La Découverte, 2002 [1961].

reproduction. And such a reproduction goes by talking and thinking – and imagining – nations and nationalism, neither necessarily in an academic nor a direct way, somewhat like the nineteenth century contributors to nationalist thinking.

In *Theories of Nationalism,* Özkirimli uses the traditional categories for describing the different trends that have been and still are for some part, particular to the field of study of nations and nationalism. These trends cannot be equated to schools of thought because they present too many internal variations. They are as follows: the perennialists and primordialists, the modernists and post-modernists, and the ethno-symbolists.[59] The main element that differentiates these trends is how they consider the modernity or antiquity of nations and nationalism.[60] Historically, the first trend is primordialism, which corresponds to the first stage in the afore-mentioned chronology. As the first trend in all its variants continues, modernist approaches start to appear in the second stage and are dominant during the third alongside post-modernist theories. Finally, the fourth stage presents a combination of all previous trends with the latest being ethno-symbolism.

Özkirmli stresses that these terms are 'umbrella' terms. For example, pirmordialism:

> "describes scholars who hold that nationality is a 'natural' part of human beings, as natural as speech, sight or smell, and that nations have existed since time immemorial."[61]

It is obvious to see how primordialist theories could easily be qualified as 'nationalist' because primordialist beliefs leave little room for the adoption of a

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59 Some have used the term 'nationalist' as an additional category closely related to the primordialists and perennialists, see e.g. Anthony D. Smith, "Gastronomy or geology? The Role of Nationalism in the Reconstruction of Nations" in *Nations and Nationalism*, Volume 1, Issue 1, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1995, pp.3-23. Such an equation would be misleading, and I would rather ague along with Billig and Calhoun, that studying nationalism does not necessarily mean one is critical of it, even more so today as we are all confronted with nationalism in our everyday life. Considering a category for 'nationalists' would surmise the opposite.

60 In this sense, the fourth stage described by Özkirimli is still very much influenced by the preceding stage.

61 Özkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism*, p.64. Smith suggests a slight variation with the perennialists: "for [them] too, the nation is immemorial. National forms may change and particular nations may dissolve, but the identity of a nation is unchanging. Yet the nation is not part of any natural order […]. The task of nationalism is to rediscover and appropriate a submerged past in order the better to build on it." in Smith, "Gastronomy or geology?", p.18.

critical stance. For Özkirimli, the common denominator of modernists is a focus on the modernity of nations and of nationalism, while ethnosymbolists focus on the relationship between pre-national social ties and cultures, and modern national forms. It is with modernism that critical approaches to nationalism emerged, as critical engagements were often influenced by the experience – close or distant – of two world wars. This explains the general adverse tendency of modernist theories towards nationalism (which the ethno-symbolists will react to). As a consequence, modernist theories generally focus on the constructed realities of nations and consider nationalism to be the ideological structure used to invent nations. Or, as Ernest Gellner famously put it: "It is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round."[62]

The post-modernists share a preoccupation with the modernity of nations with their modernist counterparts. Postmodernism differs in that it has generally generated alternative epistemological methods (with a focus on popular culture for instance) which, as well as influencing nationalism studies, have also encouraged an increasing interdisciplinarity across the social sciences, and for the current concern, in nationalism studies as well.[63] But neither postmodernism nor modernism are necessarily opposed to nationalism. For example, Smith gives a summary of how the postmodernist nationalist operates:

> "[For the postmodernist] the past is more problematic. Though nations are modern and the product of modern cultural conditions, nationalists who want to disseminate the concept of the nation will make liberal use of elements from the ethnic past, where they appear to answer to present needs and preoccupations. The present creates the past in its own image. So modem nationalist intellectuals will freely select, invent and mix traditions in their quest for the imagined political community."[64]

All the above mentioned trends are ideal types, and while different scholars and intellectuals are more clearly anchored in one trend than in another, their particular approaches often interact with other trends and naturally present internal contradictions, to the extent that as no single thinker presents the figure of an ideal

62 Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p.54.

63 See Özkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism*, pp.195-198.

64 Smith, "Gastronomy or geology?", p.18.

type. [65] However, in the case of ethno-symbolism, Anthony D. Smith might be considered an ideal type as he acknowledged the term of the trend and has elaborated his theories in radical opposition to modernist theories such as Gellner's, a former mentor of his. Smith is the most prominent scholar to ascribe to and describe these essentialist categories. While discussing "the role of the past in the creation of the present" for what he rightly considers to be one of the most central questions in "our understanding of nationalism", Smith provides descriptions of the various approaches to nationalism such as the one cited previously about postmodernists, which he considers unsatisfactory. It rhetorically allows him, without engaging with the complexity of any such theory,[66] to dismiss them and place his own as the logical alternative:

> "The challenge for scholars as well as nations is to represent the relationship of ethnic past to modem nation more accurately and convincingly."[67]

Smith's contribution to the study of nationalism is indisputable, and he has indeed been a central figure in the numerous debates in the field. Smith has also objected to the widespread tendency of using the ideal types of civic and ethnic nationalisms which, in his view, create a confusion between these ideal types and the actual historical phenomena they supposedly describe.[68] But his objection is not based on the ideological prejudice the typology induces, as it has previously been argued, but on what composes nations:

> "By definition the nation is a community of common myths and memories, as is an *ethnie*. It is also a territorial community. […] In other words nations always require ethnic 'elements'. These may, of course, be reworked; they often

65 See e.g. Smith, *Nationalism and Modernism*, London, Routledge, 1998.

66 As a hint of the complexity of modernist theories, which attempt to make sense of the role of the past, one should refer to what follows Gellner's famous formulation: "It is nationalism which engenders nations, and not the other way round" is precisely concerned with the question of historical relationship: "Admittedly, nationalism uses the pre-existing, historically inherited proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth, though it uses them very selectively, and it most often transforms them radically." Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p.54.

67 As well as preceding quotations: Smith, "Gastronomy or geology?", pp.18-19.

68 "Conceptually, the nation has come to blend two sets of dimensions, the one civic and territorial, the other ethnic and genealogical, in varying proportions in particular cases." Smith, *National Identity*, p.15.

> are. But nations are inconceivable without some common myths and memories of a territorial home."[69]

One should wonder what *ethnie* means in Smith's approach. While the term is as problematic as the term of 'nation', and is in itself central to numerous debates, Smith redefined the term distancing his definition from anthropological or sociological and political definitions of the term.[70] This redefining and the way in which concepts are used in the ethno-symbolist trend, has prompted criticism due to the conceptual confusion it generates.[71] But it has also been praised as it provides a novel conceptualisation considered "more consistent" than previous definitions and one which opens up spaces for further inquiry.[72] Smith's definition of *ethnie* reads as follows:

> "An ethnic group is a type of cultural collectivity, one that emphasizes the role of myths of descent and historical memories, and that is recognized by one or more cultural differences like religion, customs, language or institutions. Such collectivities are doubly 'historical' in the sense that not only are historical memories essential to their continuance but each such ethnic group is the product of specific historical forces and is therefore subject to historical change and dissolution"

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69 Smith, *National Identity*, p.40. The definition of 'nation' Smith refers to is "a named human population sharing an historic territory, common myths and historical memories, a mass, public culture, a common economy and common legal rights and duties for all members." p. 14.

70 To provide a succinct and indeed unsatisfactory explanation, anthropological and sociological definitions of 'ethnicity' are usually related to notions of 'otherness' and 'authenticity' and have been criticised for their Orientalist underpinnings. In anthropological literature, ethnicity has in fact been re-conceptualised as a dynamic aspect of social relations, along the same lines as identity is re-framed as 'identification'. See Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Anthropological Perspectives*, London, Pluto Press, 1993; Richard Jenkins, *Social Identity*, [3rd ed.], London, Routledge, 2008 [1996]. As a political concept, it denotes the geopolitical situation of yet another debated concept, i.e. 'minority' groups, which often denotes a politicised use of the category in e.g. egalitarian politics. For an inquiry on the intellectual history of the concept of 'ethnicity', see Marcus Banks, *Ethnicity: Anthropological Constructions*, London, Routledge, 1996; Steve Fenton, *Ethnicity*, Cambridge, Polity Press, 2010.

71 See Özkirimli, *Theories of Nationalism*, pp.183-184.

72 Eric Kaufmann and Oliver Zimmer, "Dominant ethnicity' and the 'ethnic-civic' dichotomy in the work of Anthony D. Smith" in Montserrat Guibernau and John Hutchinson [eds.], *History and National Destiny: Ethnosymbolism and its Critics*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2004, pp.63-78, p.75.

Smith continues with a listing of the six main attributes of ethnic community. The more of these attributes a population has, the closer it is to the ideal type of *ethnie*[73] With this ideal type, despite the cautious precision on historical change, there is a risk of an essentialist and deterministic reading of ethnicity and nationalism as the overarching ideal type of *ethnie* comes to corresponds quite perfectly to an ideal type of the nation.[74] Ethno-symbolist theories risks then revert to a less radical version of primordialism,[75] as ethnicity is no longer considered as a construct,[76] either conceptually or in the realities it allegedly describes.[77]

4. Transcending or Realigning Tendencies?

In a period when nationalism, under the call of "national identity", is expressed as we have seen at the beginning of this chapter, across the traditional European eastern-western divide, and possibly across the globe, it is not surprising, or rather it is symptomatic, that the dominant debates in the field of theories of nationalism have been intensively mobilised around issues opposing the construction or imagination of nations based on their 'natural', 'organic or 'ethnic' foundations.

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73 These attributes are: "1. a collective proper name 2. a myth of common ancestry 3. shared history 4. one or more differentiating elements of common culture 5. an association with a specific 'homeland' 6. a sense of solidarity for significant sectors of the population." Smith, *National Identity*, pp.20-21.

74 In spite of Smith's inclusion of related realities in his distinction between 'lateral' and 'vertical' *ethnies*. Smith, *National Identity*, pp.52-68.

75 John Breuilly, "Approaches to Nationalism", in Gopal Balakrishnan [ed.], *Mapping the Nation*, London, Verso, 1996, pp.146-174, p.150; Özkirmli, *Theories of Nationalism*, p.168.

76 For Immanuel Wallerstein, the notion of ethnic community is part of the lager phenomenon of the construction of 'peoplehood' of capitalist societies, alongside notions of race and nation which, even if using class terminology, is ideologically detached from it. As a consequence, the concept would be inefficient for a generic application such as Smith's. Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Construction of Peoplehood: Racism, Nationalism, Ethnicity" in Etienne Balibar and Immanuel Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class: Ambiguous Identities*, trans. Chris Turner, London, Verso, 1991, pp. 71-85.

77 Another point on which Smith's theory is questionable is the relevance of such an overarching ethnicity concept, which Smith uses to analyse complex realities which if indeed cultural, go beyond the notion of ethnicity, such as the less subjective category of class which involves dynamic power relations and is integral in the historical development of nationalism. These power relations which involve the creation and promotion of social meanings and myths seem to be levelled off in Smith's theory. One finally wonders if such a conception isn't misleading as far as notions of identity are concerned: 'identification' is a complex phenomenon involving numerous other 'levels' of social categorisation. On 'identification' see: Jenkins, *Social Identity*, p.18.

The focus on the 'ethnic origins of nations' which have focused much of the attention in the last decade of the twentieth century was not only linked to the critical question of the resurgence of nationalism in the so-called East in Europe but was also probably a by-product of the progressive reaction of political discourse along nationalist lines mainly in western Europe and northern America in the late 1970's and the 1980's. These developments were, according to John Breuilly, indicative of the evolution of general consensual politics towards "sharper political conflict" with the coming to power of personalities such as Margaret Thatcher or Ronald Reagan. Academic discourse, not only in nationalism, saw "the re-emergence of general theory and more polarised debate."[78]

Modernism in the study of nationalism and its critical underpinnings emerged as the dominant trend during this period.[79] Breuilly also points a finger at the re-emergence of nationalism in Western Europe. In Britain, before Thatcher was brought to power, Breuilly argues that the increasing sway of nationalism in wetsern Europe was demonstrated by the downfall of the Labour government in 1979 as it came under pressure from nationalist emergence. The question of the devolution of power brought the Labour government down in Ulster, Scotland and Wales and calls for the devolution of power.[80] There were many other examples of 'regional nationalism' across western Europe confronting state-centred national institutions as the same time as the first electoral successes of far-right parties often formed in the previous

78 John Breuilly, "Interview for H-Nationalism", March 2006, <http://www.h-net.org/~national/Breuilly.html> [accessed 23.10.2008]

79 John Breuilly, with his seminal work *Nationalism and the State*, 2nd Edition, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 1993 [1982] is considered as one of the leading scholars of this emergence, along with Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 1983, Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of* Nationalism, London, Verso, 1983, and to a lesser extent, Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger [eds.], *The Invention of Tradition*, [Canto Edition] Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1992 [1983].

80 Breuilly, "Interview for H-Nationalism".

decade.[81] Such movements are generally associated with the ethnic type of nationalism discussed in part 1.2 of this chapter.

The nationalist emergence following the fall of the Soviet Union needs to be reconsidered in this wider perspective. As it has been suggested, this re-emergence did certainly not appear *ex nihilo*: nationalism was an integral part of social and state formation on the eastern side of the Iron curtain as well as a part of the opposition and dissident movements and organisations such as *Solidarność*, albeit under the less controversial denomination of 'patriotism'. But the Iron curtain did not separate sides on nationalist grounds. In fact, nationalism, in all its forms, has been one of the most shared elements of states and societies on both sides of the “Wall”. Nationalist discourses in the 'West' were not suddenly silenced to let the ones in the 'East' take over. The latter were made more visible in the media and even while they were unexpected from a 'Westocentric' perspective.[82] But nationalist discourses and sentiments carried on and evolved, and were even normalised. In this way, the re-emergence of nationalism in central and eastern Europe could be considered as a kind of 'update', a 'normalisation' to the realities of the “free world”. An upsurge which was partly due to the release of ideas and sentiments contained by state coercion and to the sudden supply of discursive and political practices already commonplace in liberal-democracies.[83]

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81 The clearest example is the case of France's Front National, which has progressively gained ground in local and parliamentary elections from 1982 to 1986, when FN representatives obtained 35 seats in parliament. The party's significance was further reinforced in the presidential election of 1988 when the leader, Jean-Marie Le Pen, obtained more than 14% of the votes in the first round. The electoral results of the FN stabilised during the 1990's, before Le Pen reached the second round in the dramatic presidential election in 2002 with close to 17% of the vote. Le Pen's share of the vote fell short of 18% in the second round and he lost to Jacques Chirac.

82 For reasons which will be made explicit in part 2.3 of this chapter. The term 'Westocentric' is borrowed from Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation*, London, Sage, 1997, p.3.

83 The case of ex-Yugoslavia is one of the exceptions in the sense that local political practices lead to numerous wars and extreme violence, while in the majority of the ex-satellite states as well as in the newly formed states, transition was peaceful and political. Legal and civic practices tried to consolidate the liberal model by emulating practices in western states. This does not mean there are no political elements that have run counter to this liberal model, but in all the 10 states which have joined the European Union in 2004 and 2007, they have not been a determining part of the general consensus.

These remarks on the *transnationality* and historicity of nationalism leave out all analogous correlations that have taken place through colonisation and decolonisation. Beyond the apparently geographic confines of Europe, the impact of colonisation and decolonisation should not be overlooked. As part of a world organised by colonialism, all European countries are undoubtedly related to the colonial and postcolonial conditions, in one form or the other.[84] Postcolonial studies in general have indeed been one of the major influences of nationalism studies over the past couple of decades. Özkirmli indicates that one of the major theoretical gains in this period has been the "re-reading" of power, symbolic and knowledge relationships between the 'West' and the 'Rest', "the deconstruction of nationalism's negative codings" on the basis of historical contingencies.[85] A further inquiry into Postcolonial theory, and more particularly on the concept of 'Hybridity', will be conducted in the last part of the fourth chapter.

The deeper understanding brought about by Postcolonial theories has been informed by the dependencies and relationalities between different ideologies, trends and practices, such as the interaction between contemporary modern democratic principles and imperialism and colonialism, and of course, nationalism. Taking into account this relational complexity can consequently be considered as the basis for a possible transcendence of classical debates, and in nationalism studies in particular. The efforts of Postcolonial theorists show a different side in the normalisation of nationalism as a given and topical element of the modern world. The somewhat depoliticised *ethnie* of Smith's theoretical framework is symptomatic of such a

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84 On the colonial and postcolonial condition in Poland, see Clare Cavanagh **"**Postcolonial Poland" in *Common Knowledge*, Volume 10, Issue 1, Winter 2004, pp. 82-92; Bogusław Bakuła, "Colonial and Postcolonial Aspects of Polish Discourse on the Eastern 'Borderlands'" in Janusz Korek [ed.], *From Sovietology to Postcoloniality. Poland and Ukraine in the Postcolonial Perspective*, Södertörn Academic Studies 32, Stockholm, 2007, pp.41-59; Tomasz Zarycki, "Polska i jej regiony a debata postkolonialna " in Małgorzata Dajnowicz, *Oblicze polityczne regionów Polski*, Białystok, Wyższa Szkoła Finansów i Zarządzania, 2008, pp. 31-48.

85 Other major influence being Gender Studies, see Özkirmli, *Theories of Nationalism*, pp.190-194. Özkirmli refers to the insights of Geoffrey Eley and Ronald Grigo Suny, these negative codings being "the ways in which even the nation's most generous and inclusively democratic imaginings entail a process of protective and exclusionary positioning against others." in "Introduction: From the Moment of Social History to the Work of Cultural Representation" in Eley and Suny [eds.], *Becoming National: A Reader*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1996, p.28; quoted in Özkirmli, *Theories of Nationalism*, p.194.

normalisation, or even 'naturalisation'. It has previously been suggested how considering nationalism simply in its most extreme form leads to a misconception of what nationalism is and how it functions. Conversely, acknowledging the endemic condition of nationalism should not lead to an uncritical appraisal which would render nationalism too conventional or customary.[86]

The line between the two is difficult to navigate. In his provocatively entitled collection of essays "Nations Matter", Craig Calhoun underlines this difficulty:

> "We should approach nationalism with critical attention to its limits, illusions, and potential for abuse, but we should not dismiss it. Even where we are deeply critical of the nationalism we see, we should recognize the continued importance of national solidarities. Even if we wish for a more cosmopolitan world order, we should be realistic enough not to act on mere wishes."[87]

As a consequence, nationalism is not "a moral mistake", but the organising fabric of the modern world. Just that. When critically engaging with nationalism, one in fact delivers a political engagement. Not about petty nor party politics, but the politics of how modern societies organise and represent themselves.

The line is hence even more difficult to navigate. Acknowledging nationalism as a fundamental historical phenomenon in modern times, with all the implications it entails, means that the first step of a critical engagement is acknowledging one's own nationalism, however passive it is. In practice, it means taking distance both from oneself and from the every-day world one lives in and where nationalism, even in the first decades of the twenty-first century, is continuously blooming – in petty politics as well. Özkirimli, in his own critical engagement, starts off writing: "The nationalists have no country."[88] Candidly, he could have also written: "We all are nationalists."

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86 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, p. 6.

87 Calhoun, *Nations Matter*, p. 1.

88 Umut Özkirmli, *Contemporary Debates on Nationalism: A Critical Engagement*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, 2005, p. 1.

– Part 2 –
The Reproduction of Nationalism

> "Whoever believes in the necessary sequence of all historical events, sacrifices the future to the past."[89]

1. History and Tradition

Although certain elements of the conceptualisation elaborated by Smith have been subject to criticism, his reflections have the merit of showing the past to be a crucial element of nationalism and for its study and understanding. Or one should rather say 'pastness', which is the way the past is perceived, constructed and reproduced.

> "Pastness is a mode by which persons are persuaded to act in the present in ways they might not otherwise act. Pastness is a tool persons use against each other. Pastness is a central element in the socialization if individuals, in the maintenance of group solidarity, in the establishment of or challenge to social legitimation. Pastness therefore is pre-eminently a moral phenomenon, therefore a political phenomenon, always a contemporary phenomenon. That is of course why it is so inconstant. Since the real world is constantly changing, what is relevant to contemporary politics is necessarily constantly changing. *Ergo*, the content of pastness necessarily constantly changes. Since, however, pastness is by definition an assertion of the constant past, no one can ever admit that any particular past has ever changed or could possibly change."[90]

Wallerstein's analysis corroborates the conclusive remarks of the previous part related to the political foundation and the entanglement of power relations in the study of nationalism. Reconnecting with the notion of pastness is, in the sense presented above, constitutive of any form of identification as it provides for representations of identity. In the case of the "historical socio-political groups" as Wallerstein qualifies nations, the content of what constitutes pastness for national imaginings is contextually defined by nationalism.

Etienne Balibar argues that what can be acknowledged as retrospectively pre-national institutions made "possible certain features of nation-states":

89 Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, p. 27.

90 Wallerstein, "The Construction of Peoplehood", in Balibar and Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class,* p. 78.

> "This pre-history [of the national formation] differs in essential features from the nationalist myth of a linear destiny. First, it consists of a multiplicity of qualitatively distinct events spread out over time, none of which implies any subsequent event. Second, these events do not of their nature belong to the history of *one* determinate nation."[91]

Balibar addresses certain idiosyncrasies of the "use and abuse of history" for national formation.[92] Evidently, nationalism cannot be charged in being the sole social form using and abusing history. In fact, the definition of pastness indicates there is nothing exceptional about in the centrality of pastness in nationalism. But the formation of nations is not entirely determined by the process of pastness formation which it informs. Nationalism appropriates and adapts history to form a national past and this process is certainly historically conditioned, but these specific modalities how nationalism forms its own past need to be clarified.

The historical circumstances which have defined the forming of national pasts are linked to the modernity of the Nation form. Pierre Nora argues that a definitive characteristic of modernity is the increased pace of history, in other words, its acceleration.[93] The thesis of the acceleration of history is long-running.[94] Real or imagined, it has been described in many different ways and at different times throughout history.[95] The question should be posed in those terms: by what means have national pasts been produced and reproduced in the context of the acceleration of history?

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91 Etienne Balibar, "The Nation Form: History and Ideology", in Balibar and Wallerstein, *Race, Nation, Class*, pp. 86-106, p. 88.

92 The formulation is an allusion to Nietzsche's essay "On the Use and Abuse of History for Life", cf. e-text, Revised Edition 2010, trans. Ian Johnston, Vancouver Island University, Canada, <http://records.viu.ca/~johnstoi/nietzsche/history.htm> [last accessed 17.06.2010]

93 Pierre Nora, "General Introduction: Between Memory and History", in Pierre Nora [ed.], *Rethinking the French Past: Realms of Memory. Volume 1: Conflicts and Division*, Lawrence D. Kritzman [ed. English version], trans. Arthur Goldhammer, Columbia University Press, New York, 1986, p. 1.

94 Pierre Nora, like many other many other French historians of his generation, refers to an essay originally published in 1948 by Pierre Halévy, *Essai sur l'accélération de l'histoire; suivi de L'histoire va-t-elle plus vite? La Conquête des forces de la nature ; Leibniz et l'Europe*, Jean-Pierre Halévy [ed.], Editions de Fallois, Paris, 2001. For a critical examination see: Jean-Noël Jeanneney, *L'histoire va-t-elle trop vite? Essai sur un vertige*, Gallimard, Paris, 2001; and Alexandre Escudier, "Le sentiment d'accélération de l'histoire moderne : éléments pour une histoire", in *Esprit*, no. 345, June 2008, pp. 165-191.

95 We should perhaps less hurriedly replace it by the spacial and quantitative amplification of social exchanges, associated to technologies characteristic of capitalist modernity (these exchanges not always resulting in civil encounters).

The national attitude to history has two paradigms: the first one is a link between the present and glorious deeds and people of the past, and the second is the claim that the contemporary national form is the logical achievement of this glorious genealogy. These paradigms engender the belief that the nation is not a construct, but

> "a natural and universal ordering of the political life of mankind, only obscured by that long, persistent and mysterious somnolence."[96]

Although the belief in the naturalness and universality of the national order may be genuine, it provides no clue to explaining the process through which national history fulfilled its assumed destiny. In other words, the aim of forming into nation-states does not comprehend the process of its formation. Many scholars have described the national process as a creative process. As such, all legitimating historical narratives are creative processes based on rituals, commemorations and institutions, which affect and unite the whole community. The anthropologist Robert J. Foster explains how "the creation or invention of tradition […] necessarily involves the constitution of a past."[97]

Furthermore, historical memory generates the formation of a social self. Such a memory is formed using institutionalised history and fixating the would-be common elements of this shared historical memory. Nora describes the vessels of such a memory as *Lieux de Mémoire* – 'realms of memory'. Nora says the ontological justification for such realms of memory comes from the need to strengthen an identity considered to be under threat:

> "*Lieux de mémoire* arise out of a sense that there is no such thing as spontaneous memory, hence that we must create archives, mark anniversaries, organize celebrations, pronounce eulogies, and authenticate documents because

96 Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p.47.

97 "Similarly, the nation as imagined community requires the constitution of a national past – the continuous history of the community unfolding through 'homogeneous, empty time' into an equally infinite past and future. [...] Historical precedence functions, of course, to legitimate present and contingent communal relations by naturalizing them or rendering them as 'given'. But the centrality of history to nationhood inheres in the relationship between historical consciousness and 'everyday life,' the everyday historical memory that informs a subject's sense of what is 'normal, appropriate or possible'. [...] Similarly it is historical memory – a particular if often unarticulated concept of the past – that above all defines the nation as a collective subject and generates 'a sense that 'we' are the achievements of history'. Robert J. Foster, "Making National Cultures in the Global Ecumene", in *Annual Review of Anthropology*, no. 20, 1991, pp.235-260, pp.240-241. Quotation: P. Wright, *On Living in an Old Country: The National Past in Contemporary Britain*, Verso, London, 1985, p.148.

> such things no longer happen as a matter of course. When certain minorities create protected enclaves as preserves of memory to be jealously safeguarded, they reveal what is true of all *lieux de mémoire*: that without commemorative vigilance, history would soon sweep them away. These bastions buttress our identities, but if what they defended were not threatened, there would be no need for them."[98]

The threat, which Nora identifies as the acceleration of history, is thus considered as the historical reason which necessitates the "buttressing" of identities. Even considering the fact that social bodies generally tend to build up symbolic and ideological walls for protection when they perceive themselves to be under threat, this does not explain the massive and homogeneous production of realms of memory unless it is explained as a production which occurred under the auspices of state-centred nationalism.

In "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914", Hobsbawm explains how the invention of traditions in France was essential to the establishment of the Third Republic:

> "three major innovations are particularly relevant. The first was the development of a secular equivalent of the church – primary education, imbued with revolutionary and republican principles and content, and conducted by the secular equivalent of priesthood – or perhaps, given their poverty, the friars – the *instituteurs*. […] The second was the invention of public ceremonies. […] The third was the mass production of public monuments."[99]

All these inventions did not naturally come out of history and many were the result of power struggles. For example, by recuperating of the imagery of the Revolution, the moderate Republicans in the late nineteenth century were able to negotiate the terms of a political peace with the radical Jacobin Republicans, thus incorporating themselves into the fabric of the symbols of the Republic. Consequently, as the dividing line between the different republican movements became less fraught with conflict, efforts could be focused on the lines dividing the Republic from outside its symbolic frame.

When examining the process of refocusing the constitution of a national past through the creation of traditions, there are two levels on which analysis should take

98 Nora, "General Introduction: Between Memory and History", in Nora [dir.], *Rethinking the French Past*, p.7.

99 Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914", in Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, pp. 263-307, pp.271-272.

place: on the one hand the structure or means through which traditions are constructed, and on the other hand the content which is spread through this construction. Nationalism, falling in accordance with the past it construes, provides the content of these traditions. To questions that those who would design the realms of memory could ask, nationalism provided its plain and appealing glorious genealogical history:

> "But which culture and what territory? Only a homeland that was 'theirs' by historic right, the land of their forebears; only a culture that was 'theirs' as a heritage, passed down the generations, and therefore an expression of their authentic identity"[100]

The innovations of national traditions are novel in their quantity, scope and homogeneity, but not in the quality of their function. They reproduce the attitude towards history from which they were produced. The single fact that they aimed at spreading a national 'consciousness' means that they could not be made sense of prior to their institutionalisation apart from in the circles which considered them necessary – these circles holding the answers to "which culture and what territory" they were aimed for.

Coming back to realms of memory, and putting the motivation for their institutionalisation aside, there is a clear correspondence between the 'mass' traditions pointed out by Hobsbawm and Nora's definition:

> "*Lieux de mémoire* are complex things. At once natural and artificial, simple and complex, concrete and abstract, they are *lieux* – places, sites, causes – in three senses: material, symbolic, and functional. An archive is a purely material site that becomes a *lieux de mémoire* only if imagination invests it with a symbolic aura. A textbook, will, or veteran's group is purely functional object that becomes a *lieu de mémoire* only when it becomes part of a ritual."[101]

To a certain extent, what he calls *lieux de mémoire* appear to be logical building blocks for an evolution of history conceived as 'natural'. Nora limits his critical study to the description of the 'psychological' state of mind of a historical consciousness, pin pointing here and there 'facts' or 'proofs' of the change that triggered a demand for establishing these *lieux de mémoire*. He does suggest a creative process, in his description of the redefinition of identity in "dredging up its past", and in his

100 Hutchinson and Smith, *Nationalism*, p.4.

101 Nora, "General Introduction: Between Memory and History", in Nora [dir.], *Rethinking the French Past,* p.14.

description of an imposed aspect in the *lieux de mémoire* ("Memory dictates"). These descriptions suggest Nora retains a critical understanding towards what he calls an "elusive identity" and the "illusion of eternity."[102] But Nora does not look more into other historical motivations – ideological, political, and cultural – that could have been involved in the creative process. Instead, he implies that *lieux de mémoire* are consequences of a particular or revolutionary change, without reserving his judgement that certain developments may have been prompted by historically negotiated representations, or a historically contingent imagination. All in all, his analysis appears not to consider the possibility that the whole phenomenon of *lieux de mémoire* and its development in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries involve symbolic power relations.

What opposes Hobsbawm to Nora is the idea that the traditions encapsulated by realms of memory are *invented* traditions, and therefore *new* social meanings. For Nora, what is new is the intensity of the threat "History" and its pace pose to these traditions, and not the content of these traditions. Hobsbawm suggests that the setting up by the state of monuments, and other public institutions, like "the opulent ensembles on the Place de la République and the Place de la Nation in Paris", was designed to facilitate a particular recognition, which can be summed up as political:

> "such monuments traced the grass roots of the Republic – particularly in its rural strongholds – and may be regarded as the visible link between the nation and the voters."[103]

This process of institutionalisation of national symbols indeed suggests a fundamental political symbolism, whether the implementation of realms of memory was solely decided in the high rungs of the state apparatus or triggered by the demand of the people concerned. For the symbolism to be recognised by society, it also needs to be accepted and assumed as such, at least *de facto*. If the 'people' did not immediately the symbol or importance of national institutions, their symbolic deposit came to be socially accepted in time, partly due to the spread and acute presence of such *lieux de mémoire*. Otherwise, it is hardly conceivable how these

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102 "Museums, archives, cemeteries, collections, festivals, anniversaries, treaties, depositions, monuments, sanctuaries, private associations – these are relics of another era, illusions of eternity." in Nora, "General Introduction: Between Memory and History", in Nora [dir.], *Rethinking the French Past*, p.6, see also pp.10, 13 and 17.

103 Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914", in Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, pp. 263-307, p.272.

tokens of state identity would have retained such symbolism for longer than a moment. Nevertheless, even if social acceptance provides these institutions with a necessary legitimacy, it is more problematic to assign to the creative will behind the institutionalisation of realms of memory to this social acceptance. Speaking in terms of imposed state ideology may seem too simple as there may have been a certain social willingness to suspend that allowed the imposition of social meanings. But the responsibility of the choice (of what is to be erected, where and why, in the case of commemorative monuments) is nevertheless assignable to the people participating in state administration. Nationalism in general provides the basic principle for looking to the pastness it creates to choose what should be erected, represented, remembered. Nevertheless, if nationalism is objectified in such a way, it consequently has no agency. It is individuals with nationalist beliefs who, providing they have the means, take up the challenge of setting and applying these rules.[104]

2. Selection and Determinism

A problem arises when the rules provided by nationalism to select the content of national traditions truncate aspects of a reality necessary for the identity these rules propose and produce. This becomes obvious when looking at history. While historical developments are intricate phenomena which are hard to 'make sense' of, at least in a "monumental" way, nationalism offers a packaged history which is by definition reduced, but also penned to a certain type of events.[105] The events which are then commemorated through education, celebrations and monuments, are chosen in accordance with identity politics: events worth being remembered and considered highly relevant for the reproduction of the community. Hobsbawm presents the following example of how historical cuttings were used to blend the German national history into the contemporary state ideology of the late nineteenth century:

> "The major difficulty in the way of achieving [the establishment of the new Empire as the realization of the secular national aspirations of the German

104 Raymond Taras, in referring more generally to ideology, similarly argues that ideas and ideology are not autonomous but are produced by human beings. Raymond Taras, *Ideology in a Socialist State: Poland 1956-1983*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984, p. 45.

105 The choice of events is dependent on classical political myths such as analysed by Raoul Girardet in *Mythes et mythologies politiques*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1986. The general categories are "the Conspiracy", "the Saviour", "the Golden Age", and "Unity". For a thorough inquiry on the nationalist cultural selection in Europe see Anne-Marie Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales : Europe XVIIIe-XIXe siècle*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1999.

> people, and to stress the specific historical experiences which linked Prussia and the rest of Germany in its construction in 1871] was firstly the history of the Holy Roman Empire of the German nation was difficult to fit into nineteenth-century nationalist mould, and secondly that its history did not suggest that the denouement of 1871 was historically inevitable, or even likely. It could be linked to a modern nationalism only by two devices: by the concept of a secular national enemy against whom the German people had defined their identity and struggled to achieve unity as a state; and by the concept of conquest or cultural, political, and military supremacy, by means of which the German nation, scattered across large parts of other states, mainly in central and eastern Europe, could claim the right to be united in a single Greater German state. […] Buildings and monuments were the most visible form of establishing a new interpretation of German history […]."[106]

While Nora posits a pre-existing nation that seeks national sanctuaries when under threat from historical change, in the case of the advancement of a greater German state, the new construction is change itself. In other words, it cannot be assumed that nationalism is the only response to the changes of history, or that nationalism is an untimely response to timely developments. Objectified history, just like nationalism, has no agency. This suggests, as Gellner writes, that nationalists make use of "the pre-existing, historically inherited proliferation of cultures or cultural wealth, though it uses them very selectively, and it most often transforms them radically."[107]

The active cultural selection and transformation of social meaning was implemented across Europe in the late nineteenth century by the upper social strata (who should be considered as the fist 'believers')[108] to fill the gap between the centre of power, ideally the state, and the people who were recognised as such by the centre. National education curricula, commemorations, buildings and political and social theories and discourses are all attempts, Machiavellian or benevolent, calculated or naturalised, to fill in or hide that problematic gap.

> "[...] the identity of the nation is provided in arbitrary ways. The leap from culture to politics is made by portraying the nation at one moment as a cultural community and at another as a political community whilst insisting that in an ideal state the national community will not be 'split' into cultural and political spheres. The nationalist can exploit this perpetual ambiguity. National independence can be portrayed as the freedom of the citizens who make up the (political) nation or as the freedom of the collectivity which makes up the (cultural) nation. Nationalist ideology is a pseudo-solution to the problem of

106 Hobsbawm, "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870-1914", in Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, pp. 263-307, pp.276.277.

107 Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, p. 56.

108 The term is used in the same sense as in Hobsbawm, *Nations and Nationalism since 1780: Programme, Myth, Reality*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 12.

> the relationship between state and society, but its plausibility derives from its roots in genuine intellectual responses to that problem." [109]

The "genuine intellectual responses" Breuilly refers to are primarily linked to historicism. In associating it with various other concepts (such as authenticity) and political ideas, Breuilly presents how nationalism came to be "a type of political ideology which is beyond critical examination."[110] Patrick J. Geary echoes this in his historiographical critique of nationalism which he presents as the product of "an age that combined the romantic political philosophies of Rousseau and Hegel with 'scientific' history and Indo-European philology."[111]

Geary proposes a further interpretation of intellectual tools that served nationalists to implement and justify their cultural – hence historical – predominance, particularity or unity. According to him:

> "[a] fairly typical version of how the ideology of nationalism gives rise to independence movements […] posits three stages in the process of creating these imagined communities. They include, first, the study of the language, culture, and history of a subject people by a small group of 'awakened' intellectuals; second, the transmission of the scholars' ideas by a group of 'patriots' who disseminate them throughout society; finally the stage at which the national movement reaches its mass apogee. With minor variations, this process can be traced from Germany in the eighteenth century across much of the Ottoman, Habsburg, and Russian empires in the nineteenth century, and ultimately, to colonial and postcolonial Asia, Africa, and the Americas in the twentieth century."[112]

Indeed, the methods and attitudes for national construction described by Geary have been replicated in different times and places. Partha Chatterjee describes a similar process in the development of nationalist historiography in India:

> "Reviewing the development of historiography in Bengal in the nineteenth century, Guha shows how the call sent out by Bankimchandra – 'We have no history! We must have a history!'- implied in effect an exhortation to launch the struggle for power, because in this mode of recalling the past, the power to represent oneself is nothing other than political power itself. […] What [Bakimchandra] meant by true history was also clear: it was the memory of the glorious deeds of one's ancestors."[113]

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109 Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, p. 69.

110 Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, p. 70.

111 Patrick J. Geary, *The Myth of Nations: The Medieval Origins of Europe*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 2002, p. 13.

112 Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, pp. 17-18.

113 Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, 1993, p.76.

The exhortation to launch a struggle for power sounds very familiar. Such a view of the past provides the political motivation for a nationalistic history and is, in this way, very similar to Renan's famous poetical description of the glorious deeds of the forefathers.[114] As the rewriting of history has legitimised the power of sovereign states in Europe, it is naturally believed that it is the logical path to follow in order to achieve the same national sovereignty. Chatterjee also adds that: "[…] a primary sign of the nationalist consciousness [is] that it will not find its own voice in histories written by foreign rulers and that it will set out to write for itself the account of its own past."[115] This example provided by Chatterjee additionally stresses the obvious link between nationalism and history – in other words, that nationalism is very much concerned with history. While people may not accept a history written by scholars other than those considered or claiming to be their own, Indian scholars embraced the principles of European nationalist historiography.[116]

Geary, in his criticism of the nationalist approach to history, describes and explains the link between nineteenth century European scholarship and nationalism. Looking at nationalism from the view point of a medievalist, his analysis proves very useful:

> "Any historian who has spent much of is career studying [an] earlier period of ethnic formation and migration can only look upon the development of nationalism and racism with apprehension and disdain, particularly when these ideologies appropriate and pervert history as their justification. This pseudo-history assumes, first, that the peoples of Europe are distinct, stable and objectively identifiable social and cultural units, and that they are distinguished by language, religion, custom, and national character, which are unambiguous and immutable. […] Second, ethnic claims demand the political autonomy of all persons belonging to a particular ethnic group and at the same time the right of that people to govern its historic territory, usually defined in terms of early medieval settlements or kingdoms, regardless of who may now live in." [117]

The strength of Geary's analysis resides in his firm criticism of disciplines, ideas, tools, and methods – 'sciences' – that have created the contemporary scholarly world and contributed to rendering the nationalist ideology even less subject to critical examination. Through his criticism, Geary highlights the issue of the link between tradition and the past. Concerning the discipline of history, the formal, 'disciplinary'

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114 Ernest Renan, "'Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?' Conférence faite en Sorbonne, le 11 mars 1882", e-text, Bibliothèque Municipale de Lisieux, 1997, <http://www.bmlisieux.com/archives/nation01.htm> [last accessed 25.03.2010], see Chapter 3.

115 Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, p. 77.

116 Chatterjee, *The Nation and its Fragments*, p.88.

117 Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, pp. 11-12.

link between writing history in the nineteenth century and writing history at the beginning of the twenty-first is not sufficient to uncritically support what had been written and thought before.[118] There is a similar correlation with nationalism: while there is a geographical link between the Gaul provinces and the French Republic, or between the area occupied by Germanic tribes and the Weimar Republic, it is only by awkward connections that we can assume any other link. Even more so in modern times: do people in France today really share the same identity – or processes of identification – with their presumed ancestors in 1789? Did the components of French society (or any other society) remained unchanged, 'unspoiled', untouched by the passing of time, of people, and social meaning? The answer of nationalist historiography is indeed disciplinary. Intimately intermingled with positivism, which dominated nineteenth century scholarship and beyond, nationalist historiography continuously reifies and reduces social realities disentangling them from those whose actions have produced them.[119]

One of the examples Geary analyses is the construction of German nationalism. Philology was a major science used by nationalists to set up a community based on language and to define a German past and claim it as inherently German, while Germany was by then little more than an idea.[120] Philology also created links with achievements from the past by mapping out the genealogy of contemporary languages to show in an apparently very rational way how a text, written for instance in the tenth century in a vernacular language was naturally the achievement of the

118 "The very tools of analysis by which we pretend to practice scientific history were invented and perfected within a wider climate of nationalism and nationalist preoccupation." Geary, *The Myth of Nations*. p.16.

119 Positivism (or classical positivism) was the centre of heated debates in the second half of the twentieth century. As a traditional theory, has also been criticised on grounds of social and political conservatism. See Max Horkheimer, *Critical Theory*, New York, Herder and Herder, 1972.

120 Geary, *The Myth of Nations*,, p.28.

same people, as they shared the same 'language'.[121] And it is to the methods of German nationalist philology and historiography that Geary traces the origins of the 'transnational' formation of nationalist scholarly toolbox:

> "These twin tools of German nationalism – texts and philological analysis – not only created *German* history, but by implication, *all* history. They were a readily exportable package, easily applied to any corpus of texts in any language. Moreover, since German standards of 'scientific' historical scholarship increasingly dominated nineteenth century universities in Europe and even America, foreign historians trained in the German seminar method and text-critical scholarship served as ambassadors of nationalistic analysis when they returned to their own countries. […] Historical scholarship and nationalism became one."

To the "historicised national language and culture"[122] Geary adds the practice of archaeology that also reinforced the tendency to consider territories in correspondence with peoples and cultures, independently from the passing of time and consequent changes. Language provided scholars with a localisation of a people,[123] while archaeology would provide "the physical evidence of the cultural specificities of that people."[124]

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121 "Language became the vehicle for teaching the national history of the 'people' whose language this was and whose political aspirations the language expressed. However, the new philology allowed nationalist educators and ideologues to go further: it made possible the creation of a national, 'scientific' history that projected both national language and national ideology into a distant past. […] The rules of linguistics made it possible for scholars to claim linear descent form [ancient vernacular texts] to modern versions of national languages. […] Philologists provided nationalists with a means of projecting their nations into a distant [past]. […] They claimed that textual evidence, or lacking that, the historical philology, proved the existence of discrete 'linguistic communities' sharing the same vision of life, the same social and religious values, the same political systems." Geary, *The Myth of Nations*,, pp. 32-33.

122 Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, p.30.

123 The principle of the incarnation of the nation in its language can be traced back to theologist Johann Gottfried Herder in 1777, himself inspired by James MacPherson's collection of Gaelic legends published in 1760 and 1761, famously and wrongly attributed to Ossian. This is the origin of a trend of collecting popular chants that will inform and form the national imaginaries across Europe. See Thiesse, *La création des identités nationales*, chapters 1 and 2.

124 Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, pp.34-35; Chris Wickham offered a witty example showing the limits of positivism in archaeology: "a man or a woman with a Lombard-style brooch is no more necessarily a Lombard than a family in Bradford with a Toyota is Japanese; artifacts are no secure guide to ethnicity" in *Early Medieval Italy: Central Power and Local Society 400-1000*, Totowa, NJ, 1981, p.68, quoted in Geary, *The Myth of Nations*, p.38. Naturally, archaeologists have since come to see ethnicity differently, as "a more fluid and complex phenomenon"; Catherine Hills, *The Origins of the English*, Gerald Duckworth and Co., London, 2003, p.71. Such a critique of scholarship was already implied in Renan's lecture when he argued for ethnography to bear no application in politics. In spite of a number of ambiguities towards nationalism, Renan's lecture can be considered as both a historical document on nationalist thought and the beginning of the critical examination of nationalism. Renan, "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?", see Chapter 2, Part 1 of present work.

By the end of the nineteenth century academic history had predominantly come to mean national history, and national history came to surpass the realm of academia. The conception of what constituted a nation became much more dense and precise, discursively speaking, than what it had been a century before:

> "[T]he concept of the nation became much broader, comprising a human grouping which had developed through community of material and spiritual interests, and of morals, customs and traditions; hence it represents a sort of 'community of destiny,' which holds within itself the laws of its particular life."[125]

From an exclusive and political definition linked to the idea of the modern sovereign state to which belonging was based on class,[126] the nation subsequently referred not only to a state and its territory, but also to a given people, with its genealogy, language and culture. It referred to a past that was clearly outlined as the object of academic inquiry. This historical path was not only traced in the nation's past: it was the present ground and the direction for the nation's future.

The linear imaginings of the nationalist historical approach are symptomatic of the inherent determinism of nationalism. These imaginings ideally set the nation-state, with its immutable memory, symbols and identity, to be the ultimate achievement of the particular history of nations and establishes this process as universal.[127] Such an approach is embedded in a time when positivism prevailed in most disciplines and belief in progress dominated all others. Rocker notes what has come to be an evident link between the 'positive' belief in nationalism and the general approach then adopted in the discipline of history:

> "it has often been asserted that the development of the social structure in Europe in the direction of the national state has been along the line of progress.

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125 Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, p. 260.

126 The ideal class here being the cosmopolitan bourgeois liberal, which means certain cultural aspects cannot be put aside. Citizenship in the young American and French republics of the late eighteenth century was solely for men and did not encompass the poor and labouring classes, the indigenous people and the slaves. And citizenship was frequently granted to illustrious 'foreigners', as in the famous case of Tadeusz Kościuszko, both an American and Polish national hero. See Andrzej Zwoliński, *Wprowadzenie o rozważań o narodzie*, Cracow, Wydawnictwo WAN, 2005, p. 128.

127 In relation to this historical uniqueness, the naming of the nation follows a similar logic, which is exemplified in the Macedonian question: It is "a universal code for the naming of particulars." Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, p. 73.

> It is, significantly, the protagonists of 'historical materialism' who have most emphatically defended this concept."[128]

The founder and most renowned theorist of historical materialism is Karl Marx, but Rocker does not direct his criticism to Marx, but to the many Marxists who, in keeping with Marx, have set up a deterministic approach to history, which Rocker describes as fatalism.[129] Philosopher Cornelius Castoriadis has proposed a critique of the determinism of historical materialism which led him to a more generalised critique of deterministic theories as being closed theories:

> "une théorie achevée prétend apporter des réponses à ce qui ne peut être résolu, s'il peut l'être, que par la praxis historique. Elle ne peut donc fermer son système qu'en pré-asservissant les hommes à ses schémas, en les soumettant à ses catégories, en ignorant la création historique, lors même qu'elle la glorifie en paroles. […] l'idée même d'une théorie achevée et définitive est chimérique et mystificatrice."[130]

In the case of nationalism, which is a historical (or cultural) determinism, and despite the fact that there may not a be a single original thinker of nationalism as there is for historical materialism, nationalism's general principles can be derived from its various manifestations, whether they are buildings or books. Being deterministic, nationalism is indeed a closed ideology which institutes atrophied social imaginaries. The common ground between the analysis of Rocker and Castoriadis is found in their identification of a contradiction between the pretences of an ideology or a theory to understand and control social realities on the one hand and the daily *praxis* on the other. It usually results in a self-deception and a confused

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128 Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, p. 115.

129 On historical fatalism, see Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, pp. 27-28. The question of the determinism and positivism of Marx's (and Engel's) theory of historical materialism has been subject to debate. While is beyond doubt that Marx was influenced by positivism, the extent to which his theory can be considered to be an example of positivism is less certain. Marxism, as an ideological and academic school of thought, was indeed dominated by a deterministic and atrophied interpretation of Marx's theory long into the twentieth century. Later, other interpretations and critiques put Marx's theory into a more complex perspective. See Leszek Kołakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism: The Founders, the Golden Age, the Breakdown*, trans. P. S. Falla, New York/London, W. W. Norton and Co., 2005 [1976]; John Holloway, *Change the World Without Taking Power: The Meaning of Revolution Today*, Pluto Press, London, 2002.

130 "An complete theory claims to provide answers to that which can only, if ever, be resolved by historical praxis. Thus, it can only close its sytem by pre-enslaving human beings to its schemes, subjugating them to its categories, and ignoring historical creation, even as it glorifies such creation in speech […] The very idea of a complete and definite theory is a chimera and a mystification." Cornelius Castoriadis, *L'institution imaginaire de la société*, Editions du Seuil, Paris, 1975, pp. 94, 97. For his critique of Marxism, see chapters 1 and 2.

view of reality which Rocker writes is “in conflict with the daily experiences of life.”[131]

3. Every-day Nationalism

Rocker's work was published in 1936, and his experience of National Socialism in Germany certainly influenced his critical examination of nationalism. But Rocker, who emigrated to the United-States after Hitler's accession to power, does not reduce the question of nationalism to that of Nazi Germany or fascism. He analyses it in the *longue durée*, and the development of fascism, of state authoritarianism is set in the complex web of meanings beyond the restrictive notion of culture as the arts. Indeed, *Nationalism and Culture* is the result of an inquiry that began before the first World War when nationalism was already an every-day phenomenon and disruption in Rocker's daily life, as well as the lives of the majority of people in Europe as well as across the 'rest' of the colonial world.

Rocker examines conflicts of interests between the various classes and social conditions which compose the so-called nation. Far from forming a uniform whole, the national society is a social “magma”, with certain dominating features, although it cannot be reduced to these features. Rocker's understanding of nationalism prefigures Howard Zinn's account of how national (or patriotic) and military fervour in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century America united the different social classes “creating a safety valve for explosive class conflict.”[132] There is no reason for such a discourse not to have functioned elsewhere for similar purposes, particularity in other capitalist countries. In this light, the question that arises is how did nationalism captivate and divert the focus of people engaged in class struggle, or more generally in power struggles for political representation and better living conditions? Leaving aside the role capitalism played in uniting or pacifying imaginaries, nationalism, when naturalised, was a very strong incentive to not revolt.

Billig uses the term 'banal nationalism' to describe the reproduction of the national imaginary in established nation-states, which contrary to Renan's “daily plebiscite” (as a conscious and wilful act), is the unmindful recognition of the nation-state by its

131 Rocker, *Nationalism and Culture*, p. 260.

132 Howard Zinn, *A People's History of the United-States: 1942 – Present*, [3rd Ed.], Pearson Education Ltd., Harlow, 2003 [1980], p. 363.

members. Billig's precise aim is to decipher the "ideological means by which nation-states are reproduced":

> "To stretch the term 'nationalism' indiscriminately would invite confusion […]. For this reason, the term **banal nationalism** is introduced to cover the ideological habits which enable the established nations of the West to be reproduced.[…] Daily, the nation is indicated, or 'flagged', in the lives of its citizenry. Nationalism, far from being an intermittent mood in established nation-states, is the endemic condition."[133] [emphasis in original]

The phenomenon of banal nationalism, as described by Billig, makes the indisciminate use of the term 'nationalism' confusing. The common use of the term nationalism refers to marginal phenomena: "[i]t always seems to locate nationalism on the periphery."[134] And it could be argued that the often self-declared nationalism of those 'nationalist' movements or parties is precisely a means to render their ideological stances 'banal'. But more significantly, this confusion shows the relationship mainstream, 'central' nationalism establishes with the 'margins': pointing a finger at the nationalism of 'others' is part of what makes 'ours' unnoticed.[135]. Consequently, it is easier to define 'their' nationalism simply as 'nationalism'. In this sense, the accepted definition stands for a reactionary, racist and xenophobic political agenda, usually associated with far-right political groups. Billig describes this popular use of nationalism (which stands for the reactionary, racist and xenophobic political agendas) as 'hot' in contrast with the unnoticed banal form(s)[136]

One could argue that Billig's categories of 'banal' versus 'hot' nationalism follow the pattern of civic/ethnic categorisation. But while the relationship between the former categories may be confusing if related to the civic/ethnic contrast, banal does not mean 'cold' nationalism. Billig does not focus on particular components of nationalism, on the 'selection' previously mentioned, but rather on how it is performed. Consequently, it is not only what is meant that makes something nationalist, but also and maybe more significantly *how*. The "unwaved" flags on institutional buildings, quality labels on food products, the division between 'home' and 'international' news, the syntactic habits and omissions in vocabulary (or the lack of it), stereotypes and amalgamates, all these are discursive means through

133 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, p. 6.

134 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, p. 6.

135 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, pp. 5-6.

136 Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, pp. 43-46.

which central nationalism is naturalised and forgotten. In fact, Billig even suggests that in certain instances, the more banal practices of national commemoration are, the more internalised their meanings are, and the more they are accepted leading to a pacification of symbolic (or psychological) struggles.[137] Language plays a particular role in this reproduction. Both public discourses and private conversations speak within the frame of nationalism. From pronouns to adjectives and nouns, language is probably the most undetected mode of the nation's reproduction. The deixis thus created invariably directs the meaning to the direction of the national imaginary.[138] The nation is not only narrated in 'History', it is also narrated in most *texts*. In relation to the aforementioned toolbox for national history described by Geary, even contemporary academic works often do not escape the nation. Ulrick Beck uses the expression 'methodological nationalism' to describe the uncritical attachment of conventional social sciences to what have come to be assumed as sociological certainties. This academic reproduction of nationalism takes the traditional sociological categories, such as nation or class, for granted. The conventional sociological approaches are thus caught in the circular argument of what Beck calls "Max Weber's 'Iron cage'": "they take for granted what they actually try to demonstrate; that we still live, act and die in the normal world of nation-state modernity."[139]

But talking outside the nationalist framework demands an effort which is probably still beyond the contemporary linguistic possibilities. Nationalism is, in this sense, the most effective modern ideology. Through such an internalisation, it can maintain itself despite contradictions and competing interpretations. To what extent then, one may ask, does Rocker's assertion about nationalism being in conflict with the daily experiences of life apply in established nation-states if it has reached such an banality? First of all, nationalism and related themes continue to be instrumentalised for the purposes of liberal political agendas along with questions of immigration. The disruption of every-day life experienced by Rocker may now be less palpable than it was in the 1930's, especially from a 'central' point of view. But the margins

137 Billig himself refers to the position of Robert Coles on the significance of saluting the flag by school children in the USA, in *The Political Life of Children*, Boston, Atlantic Monthly Press, 1986, p. 60. Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, p. 51.

138 See Billig, *Banal Nationalism*, pp. 105-109.

139 Ulrich Beck, *World Risk Society*, Cambridge, Polity, 1999, p. 133.

have not disappeared, and class struggle is still covered with the national question, although not always with a rallying fervour.

– Chapter 2 –
Ariadne's Thread

"When one dreams alone, it is only a dream. When many people dream together, it is the beginning of a new reality."[140]

140 Friedrich Stowasser (aka Friedensreich Hundertwasser).

– Part 1 –
The Narration of Reality

1. Discursive Formations

The concept of discursive formation which Calhoun uses to describe nationalism relates to Michel Foucault's conceptualisation of 'discourse'.[141] Discourse in this sense should not be reduced to speeches, but should be conceived as an overarching term for a group of statements which function according to a common set of rules, even when these statements are part of different fields.[142] These rules are composed of linguistic and formal rules (such as rhetoric), and also of visual and material representations, of spatial and temporal positioning, and so on. On the highest or fullest level, a discourse can be equated with the social imaginary of a given period, as all the discourses it contains will follow its normative rules regarding what is normal and what is not, what is included and what is excluded.[143] As such, it is an *order* which sets the organisation of a society through mechanisms which produce the correspondent knowledge and practices. In his works, Foucault described the transformation of modern discourses by examining the conditions which allowed the emergence of those discourses.[144] These discourses in turn support and reproduce sets of social practices, or create and enforce them. These processes are mirrored in the concept of social imaginary elaborated by Cornelius Castoriadis. Respectively,

141 Calhoun, *Nationalism*, p. 4.

142 See Judith Revel, *Le vocabulaire de Foucault*, Paris, Editions Ellipses, 2009, pp. 36-39.

143 Foucault himself does not make use of the term of social imaginary, preferring the more restrictive concept of *episteme*, which he defines as the phenomena of relations between scientific discourses. See e.g. Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977*, Colin Gordon [Ed.], Pantheon Books, New York, 1980, especially "The Confession of the Flesh" pp. 194-228.

144 Famously, in *History of Madness* (*Histoire de la folie à l'âge classique, in* Michel Foucault, *Dits et Écrits*, vol. I, Paris, Gallimard, 2001) Foucault describes discourses related to madness and unreason in relation to the treatment and representation of the sick and "mentally deranged", questioning in fine the general approach 'we' have to the 'norm'.

Castoriadis's "instituted imaginary" and "instituting imaginary" function in a similar way in respect to the formation and reproduction of social meanings.[145]

In *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, Foucault presents how discourses are unified through the *dispersion* of their composing elements. A discourse consequently involves an inherent discontinuity.[146] Foucault composes a theoretical analysis of the rules of discontinuity according to which discursive statements are ordered. This in turn, is labelled a discursive formation. The reason for the labelling usually derives from the ambivalences of the term "discourse", which follow a similar dispersion:

> "I wonder whether I have not changed direction on the way; whether I have not replaced my first quest with another… instead of gradually reducing the rather fluctuating meaning of the word 'discourse', I believe I have in fact added to its meanings: treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualized group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a certain number of statements."[147]

Foucault here provides three definitions which depend on the linguistic or semantic use of the term. By the turn of phrase in the preceding quotation, Foucault expresses the difference between discourse and what he calls "natural language", i.e. linguistic language.[148] This *dislocation* introduces the demonstration of how language and "statement" (which he refers to in all three definitions of discourse) operate on different "level[s] of existence."[149] This is the first step in the clarification of what "the atom of discourse" is.[150] This epistemological shift from a unit-based logic to a process-based approach will consequently provide elements for understanding discourse.

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145 Castoriadis also provides a third category, namely the 'radical imaginary', which denotes the process of creation of social significations. See below, sections 2.2.2 and 2.2.3.

146 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, A.M. Sheridan Smith [Trans.], London, Routledge, 1989 [1972], pp. 36-37.

147 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 90.

148 The French term for natural language is *langue*. It is different from *langage* which defines all means of expression.

149 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 96. For the demonstration, see pp. 89-98.

150 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 90.

To avoid reframing Foucault's entire poetics, and to further clarify the notions of "discourse" or "statement", turning once again to a different paradigmatic attempt to elucidate social significations will prove enlightening.

In *The Imaginary Institution of Society,* Castoriadis describes this unit-based logic as "ensemblist-identitary" (*ensembliste-identitaire*) and opposes to the notion of *magma*. The imaginary is thus defined as a magma of significations, including the unit-based ontology dependent on processes of social and historical change (the imaginary's historicity). A magma cannot consequently be reduced to an ensemble of units.[151] In a similar vein, Foucault's "statements" cannot be reduced to sentences, propositions or speech-acts which are all parts of unit-based structures. Yet statements involve or include propositions and linguistic units, or as Foucault puts it, are "caught up […] in a logical, grammatical, locutory nexus."[152]

This essentially leads to a relational differentiation between *units* and the *functions* of units; a different logic for approaching the historicised and necessarily social formation of meaning. For Foucault, the function of statements is enunciation. This means that the relation between signs and statements is a form of a fluctuating tension between representation and signification. A representation is fictitiously fixed, and can potentially refer to indeterminate significations. But the contextual signification a representation refers to will be determined by a sliding which involves the situation in which the sign is being performed. Consequently a particular sign can refer to a series of possible statements – simultaneously or independently of each other –, and statements can be determined by different signs or series of signs. The Monuments erected to commemorate a historical event can be interpreted accordingly. If one particular monument is considered as a unit (a series of signs), a certain number of significations can be apprehended.

The realms of memory discussed in the first chapter can be characterised in such a way. Monuments commemorating soldiers of the Great War are the first examples of the institutionalised commemoration through monuments dispersed on a national

151 Castoriadis, *L'institution imaginaire*, p. 497.

152 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 97.

scale.[153] From an aesthetic point of view, each of these monuments reflects a similar artistic and historically determined style – despite certain marginal variations. The military commemoration consists in names of local soldiers killed during the First World War inscribed on one side or panel of the monument. Above the list of names, there reads a dedication or a shibboleth glorifying the nation which is intended to give a sense to the sacrifices. "To the children of Loivre who died for France" (*Aux enfants de Loivre morts pour la France*) is a typical example of such an inscription. The strength of its signification consists in uniting the locality with the nation, placing it within the larger referent in respect to the sacrifice. The locality – in this case the village of Loivre in the Marne département in the North-East of France – is recognised as having suffered a terrible loss (its children) for no reason other than for France, hence granting it a space within the nation and identifying it as a part of the nation. Furthermore, the signification gives what it considers to be the most meaningful reason for such a sacrifice. The village is personified through to the names inscribed beneath the dedication, hence representing people behind the names; people with ties to the locality but no longer able to express them. The inscriptions are also accompanied by various national symbols in the form of statues and bas-reliefs.[154]

This brief analysis provides a demonstration of how a discursive formation operates. The signification of the monument in Loivre is a composition of signs which direct, on different levels, the overall signification of the monument as a national commemoration and a glorification of the locality. In spite of the relatively simple association of its elements, the depth of its signification cannot be grasped if it is not placed within the space it was intended for: the national space. Each commune in

153 In France alone, more than 35,000 monuments were erected between 1919 and 1925, reflecting the number of the smallest administrative districts in France (communes). For pictures of the Loivre monument: <http://www.crdp-reims.fr/memoire/lieux/communaux/loivre.htm> [last accessed 05.11.2010]

154 The prevailing symbols are at least one soldier in uniform and Republican symbols such as flags, Marianne (the female personification of Liberty and the Republic) and the rooster, which in the case of the monument in Loivre, is on top of a column.

France has its own monument bearing the same signification for the locality.[155] As the monuments are so widespread, a sliding shift to a new level of signification takes place as each of these monuments becomes a sign and their dispersion becomes the new statement. The signification in the resulting perspective is the unity of the nation in its loss and endeavours. Yearly state celebrations of Armistice day on the 11th of November reproduce and "re-signify" these monuments and their signification.

"A series of signs will become a statement on condition that it possesses 'something else' […], a specific relation that concerns itself – and not its cause, or its elements."[156] This "something else", again, is present – on a different level – in the explanation Castoriadis gives of what a signification is:

> "an indefinite skein of interminable *referrals* to *something other* than (than what would appear to be stated directly). These other things can be both significations and non-significations – that to which significations relate or refer. The lexicon of the significations of a language does not revolve around itself, is not closed in upon itself, as has flatly been stated. What is closed in upon itself, fictively, is the code, the lexicon of ensemblist-identitary signifieds, each of which can take on one or more sufficient definitions. But the lexicon of significations is always open; for the full signification of a word is everything that can be socially stated, thought, represented or done on the basis of this word."[157]

The case of the monuments presented above, which through an oversimplification presents the indefinite skein of referrals, fits the analysis of Foucault and Castoriadis of statements and significations. As a represented whole, they form a discourse

155 A certain number of monuments erected for the commemoration of the dead do not follow the pattern described here. Although marginal, they usually leave the national referent out to focus only on the loss, usually with a pacifist symbolism focusing on the realities of war. Statues representing a crying woman, or another with her children probably awaiting the return of their husband and father, with inscriptions such as the simple "To our dead" ("A nos morts") or "curse be the war" ("que maudite soit la guerre") are rare, but while they locally operate in a similar way, their signification follows a different thread.

156 Foucault, *The Archaeology of Knowledge*, p. 100.

157 Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution of Society*, Kathleen Blamey [trans.], Cambridge, Polity Press, 1997 [1975], pp. 243.

which, if one continued to follow its complex interlaced thread, is a fragment of the discursive formation of nationalism.[158]

2. Essentialist Short-cuts

The process of such discursive formations leads to an internalisation – mostly unconscious – of their significations. These, in turn, appear natural and immediate (literally, not mediated). This *habitus*[159] of frames of references and interpretations is made up of stories or narratives, such as the one told by the World War One commemorative monuments. In the aforementioned illustration, the narrative could be summed up as follows: our husbands, fathers and sons, and our ancestors – children of the land we live on – have sacrificed their lives for the nation, which our land is part of, hence ultimately for us.

These frames provide the grid of preconceptions which make a certain sense out of the social world. The simplest form of these preconceptions are stereotypes, also know as prejudices, literally pre-judgements. A stereotype was defined as the unaltered reproduction of an image in the nineteenth century as it was originally a method of reproducing images on metal plates. The word was later defined in sociology as the simplified conception of a phenomenon based on prejudice as opposed to observation. Walter Lippman attributes an effort economy function to stereotypes; in order to avoid reflecting on the observation of social phenomena, these spaces are filled in, or the questions are “gullibly” answered with readily

158 The ideas of 'sliding' or of 'referral', of 'something other', which is central to the definition of signification and to the way discourse and the imaginary function, calls Jacques Derrida's designation of 'différance' to mind: “[...] the signified concept is never present in and of itself, in a sufficient presence that would refer only to itself. Essentially and lawfully, every concept is inscribed in a chain or in a system within which it refers to the other, to other concepts, by means of the systematic play of differences. Such a play, *différance*, [...] will designate [...] the movement according to which language, or any code, any system of referral in general, is constituted “historically” as a weave of differences. in *Margins of Philosophy*, Alan Bass [trans.], Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1982 [1972], pp. 11-12.

159 “[...] the habitus could be considered as a subjective but not individual system of internalized structures, schemes of perception, conception, and action common to all members of the same group or class and constituting the precondition for all objectification and apperception […]. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Richard Nice [trans.], Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977 [1972], p. 86

available stereotypes.[160] These stereotypes and prejudices are part of the stories told and retold in the reproductions of social frames of reference and interpretation.[161] These stories, about "ourselves" and about "others" are also part of the discursive formation of nationalism. National stereotypes, and national self-images and images of others (sometimes both at the same time) act as differentiating processes between one imaginary and another. They are part of the social construction of reality:

> "The world of everyday life is not only taken for granted as reality by ordinary members of society in the subjectively meaningful conduct of their lives. It is a world that originates in their thoughts and actions, and is maintained as real by these."[162]

Stereotypes are here broadly defined as the oversimplified prejudices and representations, not only what is commonly described as stereotypes. Stereotyping involves a more general process of viewing the world, which explains both their "stubborn resistance to change" and why they are "demonstrations of ignorance."[163] Both representations of one's own society as well as representations of otherness are based on essentialist discursive practices. In general, they preconceive one feature as essential in order to make sense of it. In the case of national self-images, they are usually considered as relatively permanent and functioning "as self-reinforcing devices, acting like filters that structure incoming information to make it fit with fundamental beliefs."[164] In the case of nationalism, stereotypes buttress the sense of a national identity in the form of constant reminders of the characteristics of the nation often contrasted to those of "others", preferably other nations, although the "other within" is another recurrent theme. In this approach, stereotypes are not

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160 Walter Lippman, *Public Opinion*, NuVision Publications, LLC [digital publishing], 2007 [1921], pp. 54-55.

161 Jan Berting and Christiane Villain-Gandossi, "The role and significance of national stereotypes in international relations: an interdisciplinary approach", in Teresa Walas [ed.], *Stereotypes and Nations*, International Cultural Centre, Cracow, 1995, pp. 13-27. p. 13.

162 P.L. Berger and T. Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*, New York, Routledge, 1967, pp. 19-20.

163 Berger and Luckmann, "The role and significance of national stereotypes in international relations", p. 17.

164 Bo Petersson, "National Self-Images among Russian Regional Politicians: Comparing a Pilot Study on Perm and the Case of St. Petersburg", CFE Working paper series no. 1, 1998, p. 10. Available online: <http://edit.info.lu.se/upload/LUPDF/CentrumforEuropaforskning/cfewp01.pdf> [last accessed 10.09.2010]

necessarily negative as is usually considered. There are positive stereotypes.[165] National self-images are not always negative ones by virtue of the fact they aim for the reproduction of national identification. One notorious stereotype about Britain – in France and indeed worldwide – concerns food. It is generally believed that British food tastes bad. While some dishes indeed may taste bad to some people, it is hard to define British food, and consequently inappropriate to generalise about food in Britain (as opposed to "British food").[166] People may be misinformed and may never have tasted or acquired the taste for a well done Sunday roast, while themselves not being aware of the non-uniform and indeed subjective appreciation of food in France. In the city of Lyon for instance, which promotes itself as a gastronomic capital, one finds examples of the finest cuisine of renowned chef Paul Bocuse alongside a local cuisine which many people in France would dismiss, with dishes served in restaurants called "*bouchons*" often featuring tripe. Somebody without the acquired taste for tripe may only focus on this to define food in Lyon and would thus be forming a negative stereotype. Yet, such a negative stereotype would risk contradicting the logic by which if British food tastes bad, French food tastes good in comparison, which is France's worldwide positive stereotype. But any dish judged to be bad in French food wouldn't necessarily turn this belief around: it is acceptable because it is defined as a "speciality".

National-self images are contained in stereotypes and images about others. In a similar way, stated self-images will give the nation a *status* that is unique, preventing other nations from becoming equals in one way or another. In respect to food and cuisine, a curious row or discursive competition took place in early 2009 which is symptomatic of the importance of the "ownership" of particular national self-images. On 23 February 2008, during his inaugural speech at the international

165 See Bo Petersson, *Stories About Strangers, Swedish Media Constructions of Socio-Cultural Risk*, Oxford, University Press of America, 2006.

166 It has also become and national negative self-image in Britain, which is symptomatic in publications such as Joanna Blythman's book *Bad Food Britain: How a Nation Ruined it's Appetite*, London, Fourth Estate, 2006.

agricultural show in Paris,[167] French president Nicolas Sarkozy declared that gastronomy was "an essential feature" of French heritage.[168] As a consequence, he promised to lobby for France to become the first country to apply to UNESCO to have its gastronomy listed as an "Intangible Cultural Heritage".[169] The recognition of a national essential feature is based on a worldwide – or rather inter-national – recognition of the list of these features.[170] But the particularity and primacy of French gastronomy was considered relatively overrated in the mind of the Italian Prime minister, Silvio Berlusconi, who declared Italian gastronomy should in fact be the first to place such bid. But instead of avoiding such a nationalistic definitions of gastronomy, many more states have since embarked on similar bids they regard they national cuisines to be as unique as any other, if not better.[171] Britain --despite having a "de-territorialised" national dish in"Chicken Tikka Massala" according to

167 The *Salon international de l'agriculture* (usually referred to without its international qualification) is an annual fair which has been held under its current name since 1964. It includes the *Concours général agricole* (general agricultural competition), first held in 1870, which gives awards for the best agricultural productions in various categories.

168 "La cuisine française, bientôt patrimoine de l'Unesco?", *L'Express.fr*, 25 February 2008, retrieved 26.10.2009: <http://www.lexpress.fr/actualite/societe/la-cuisine-francaise-bientot-patrimoine-de-l-unesco_470495.html>

169 A similar demand by the state of Mexico was dismissed in 2005. The idea for UNESCO to promote the safeguarding of intangible cultural heritage in a similar way it has been doing for tangible heritage originates in the 'International Consultation on New Perspectives for UNESCO's Programme' which took place on 16 and 17 June 1993. After agreeing on a definition, the 'Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage' was adopted on 17 October 2003. For reports on meetings of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Commission, see: <http://www.unesco.org/culture/ich/index.php?lg=en&pg=00015> [last accessed 15.09.2010].

170 The result of the lobbying by the French government was the inscription in NovemBER 2010 on the Unesco intangible heritage list of the French "*repas gastronomique*" (gastronomic meal), which , according to Unesco experts, refers a "social customary practice which celebrates the most important moments in social and individual fife." "Le "repas gastronomique des Français" inscrit au patrimoine de l'humanité", *Le Monde*, 16.10.2010.

171 Government officials of Spain, Greece and Morocco have announced joining the Italian bid due to their common 'Mediterranean quality'. See Henry Samuel, "French cuisine 'not a world treasure', says UN", *Telegraph.co.uk*, 6 July 2008, retrieved 23.08.2010: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/europe/france/2257965/French-cuisine-not-a-world-treasure-says-UN.html>

the British foreign secretary Robin Cook in 2001 – is not yet likely to place such a bid given the coercion of established stereotypes.[172]

It may first appear as surprising that such a trivial issue could create a debate that made the headlines. It could have become a political plea against the globalised food industry and multinational food chains, and it is maybe misunderstood and ideologically promoted in this way. For the current purpose, it demonstrates that stereotypes in a world of nation-states are important: they are corollary representations of these nation-states in the same way flags are. Given their simplicity, they allow a simple demarcation of what are otherwise seemingly equivalent entities. Visual artist Yanko Tsvetkov is the author of a series of maps of Europe on which each country's name is replaced by a stereotype according to a particular point of view. The project “Mapping Stereotypes: The Geography of Prejudice” started in 2009 and has been attracting a lot of attention on the World Wide Web as well as inspiring many “amateur” versions.[173]

Leaving aside the artistic quality of these graphic representations, they are interesting on the level of the world-view they convey in a simple and yet comical and self-reflexive way (the first of the series is entitled “Where I live”). They portray the practical use of stereotypes, a sense that 'we' know something about the world we live in. National stereotypes are self-evident and inherent to the 'national' world-view. As such, no one can entirely escape these simplified representations. Nonetheless, if they are considered as a primary instead of the definite step for acquiring knowledge of the complexity of the social-historical world, the process of acquiring this knowledge eventually involves the breaking of these inherited images. Pushed to their limits, stereotypes usually break fall on their own sword, showing what the core of the problem of essentialism is: covering the complexity of social reality. As social realities are complex, simplified approaches are certainly necessary

172 In a speech to the Social Market Foundation in London in April 2001, foreign secretary Robin Cook endorsed Chicken Tikka Massala as “a true British national dish”. Robin Cook, “Robin Cook's chicken tikka masala speech” [extracts], *Guardian.co.uk*, 19.04.2001, retrieved 14.06.2009: <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2001/apr/19/race.britishidentity>

173 See Annex 3 for three Yanko Tsvetkov's maps and Annex 4 for an anonymous amateur adaptation: “Europe according to Poles”.

as means of accessing these realities. But essentialist associations such as stereotypes or national images are meant as first and last instance fixities, or in other words, identities. The nationalist essentialist approach reduces the complex fabric of reality in an exclusionary fashion.

The case of the "Polish plumber" is symptomatic of these processes. During the debates in France in 2005 preceding the referendum on the treaty establishing a constitution for Europe, the "Polish plumber" became the symbol, indeed the bogeyman, of cheap labour in relation to the "Directive on services in the internal market".[174] No other nationality was so closely associated to plumbing as Poles, although "Estonian architects" or "Czech IT specialists" were less prominently part of the picture. The origins of the "Polish plumber" are unclear, but its legacy is the subsequent association of plumbing to Poland, and some might even argue that a Polish electrician would have been even more significant as a symbol.[175] But this has not prevented the subsequent association of plumbing with Poland. The random association forms a new contextualised symbol. The "Polish plumber" was later re-appropriated by the Polish tourist board in its 2005 summer campaign. This included posters of a young male model dressed as a plumber and posing in a suggestive manner with a collage of Polish tourist attractions in the background. A caption read: "I am staying in Poland – do come over" (*Je reste en Pologne – venez nombreux*).[176] This was the first of many reproductions of what can now be called the myth of the

174 Commonly referred to as the "Bolkenstein directive", named after Frederik Bolkenstein, member of the European Commission from 1999 to 2004.

175 In reference to Lech Wałęsa, one of the leaders of the trade union "Solidarność" and the first elected president of the third Republic of Poland.

176 See Annex 5. Translation from Stephen Mulvey, "Poland bids for EU Mr Fixit role ", *BBC News website*, retrieved 03.02.2007: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4627111.stm>. Another poster of the same promotional campaign depicted a nurse with the following caption (this time in English as well): "Poland: I'm awaiting you" (sic).

Polish plumber.[177] The strength of both the stereotyped image and the response by the Polish tourist board lies in their formal simplicity.[178] But their significations reach beyond their forms. In a sense, they are metaphors for a series of significations which generate meaning and stimulate reaction (such as amusement).

3. *Unitas Multiplex*

These images function on two levels of analysis in the same way as myths do in Roland Barthes' analysis. In his seminal work *Mythologies,* Barthes presents a structuralist explanation of how myths function on two levels: the semiotic level and the social level.[179] Myths are not simply considered as the mythological stories of ancient times, but as "a system of communication, a message."[180] As "a mode of signification", Barthes first analyses the myth's semiotic form (or linguistic structure) making use of the linguistic structuralist approach established by Fernand de Saussure. On the first level analysis ('linguistic'), a sign is the correlation of a signifier and a signified. But this is insufficient to understand the mode of

177 The myth has spread very quickly indeed. In the years following the political formulation of the stereotype, and having been extensively used in media discourse, it has sunk into popular culture to the extent that one can find references to it in everyday conversations ans in popular culture in general. British comedian Omad Djalili, in a sketch entitled "Foreign accent syndrome", creates a pun explaining how it not necessary anymore to switch between social accents to obtain a fair price from a plumber: one simply needs to speak Polish (*The Omid Djalili Show – Series 1*, BBC One, 2007). In the 2010 comedy film *L'arnacœur* (*Heartbreaker*) by Pascal Chaumeil, one of the secondary characters played by François Damien pretends to be a plumber, by affecting an Eastern European accent. When failing to repair the broken air conditioning, he tells the story of the family he needs to support back home in Poland. Such evidence suggests that the myth has integrated contemporary imaginaries, and more particularly the European imaginary.

178 It could be argued that the use of the stereotype in promotional tourist campaign would render stereotypes less problematic. Stereotypes play a central role in comedy. Whether they are overcome, broken up or reproduced depends on the intention of the comedian. For example, many jokes are built in a way which involves three characters from three different nationalities. The punch line usually involves a blunder or abuse action from the character whose nationality is associated with backwardness: the Irishman from a British point of view or a Belgian from a French point of view. These can be described as nationalistic jokes. On the other hand, a certain number of comedians aim at breaking stereotypes up, eventually showing the absurdity of these simplified representations. In response to the expression "axis of evil" which U.S. President George W. Bush re-assigned to Iraq, Iran and North Korea in his 'State of the Union Address' on 29 January 2002, a group of American comedians of Middle-Eastern background decide to set up an 'Axis of Evil Comedy Tour'. Their open objective was the breaking up of simplistic images and negative associations of the Middle-East promoted in political discourse.

179 Roland Barthes, *Mythologies*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1957.

180 Barthes, *Mythologies*, p. 181.

signification of myths as this first level analysis is too basic: one would need a second level analysis ('mythological') which Barthes describes as a "secondary semiological system" ("*un système sémiologique second"*).[181] In this second level analysis, the linguistic sign becomes the signifier and is associated to an added signified to produce the mythological sign. In the case of a national stereotype, such as the "Polish plumber", the linguistic level produces no added meaning: it is simply the association of two first level signs. Yet, within the context of a political discourse on the liberalisation of services within the European Union – and more precisely in a speech by a ultra-conservative political figure opposing the said liberalisation,[182] shortly after Poland along with nine other central and east European states had joined the European Union – the association becomes a sign of the second level; the mythological level of signification. Barthes, although basing his critical approach to what he calls 'media myths' on structuralist linguistics, moves away from structuralism as he establishes a "semiological chain".[183] And yet, in keeping the framework of structural linguistics, Barhes only moves half-way by simplifying the game of social and historical significations which conspire in defining the signification of the myth (the signified elements). As such, his chain should be repeated over and over: myths engender other myths. The "plumber" of the Polish tourist board can be considered as a sort of third level signification which involves the first hand myth as well as other contextual significations: if it had not been produced by the Polish tourist board, the posters would convey the simple reproduction of the first-hand signification with an alternative signifier (then probably losing its seemingly benign humour).

Such consideration leads to a revision of the logic of semiotic analysis, which despite being a useful tool, is basically flawed. It considers the sign as a totality of associated concept and image ("total associatif d'un concept et d'une image"), the

181 Barthes, *Mythologies*, p. 187.

182 Philippe de Villiers, an ultra-conservative French politician, was one of the promoters of the "Polish plumber". E.g. *"La grande triche du oui"*, Interview, *Le Figaro*, 15 March 2005.

183 Barthes, *Mythologies*, p. 187.

concept being the signified and the image, the signifier.[184] In the formation of myths, Barthes theory uses a static linguistic framework on a dynamic, shifting phenomenon of myths. This chronological and progressive approach does not consider the possibility of retro-active alteration of meaning. Once a myth is formed and is being referred to in other myths, the linguistic sign does not remain unspoiled. The first-hand sign is indeed affected by these mythical formations. In other words, before coining the expression the "Polish plumber", the composing signs of this myth were already part of a complex nexus of significations in which, as linguistic signs, their neutral or descriptive, dictionary significations were irrelevant. A Hungarian electrician would have done the job just as well: as associating any central or eastern European quality to a working class profession would have done the trick.

One possible reason for the efficiency of such association is to be found in the discourse on immigration which has developed alongside the consolidation of nation-states. For example, the principles of French immigration policy were first institutionalised in the 1930s These principles present the parameters of the discourse on immigration in what came to be the myth of the foreign worker, like the case of the Polish plumber which is the latest invention of the sort. In 1938, Philippe Serre was appointed State Undersecretary, responsible for immigration and foreigners on behalf of the Council Presidency (*sous-secrétaire d'Etat, chargé des services de l'immigration et des étrangers auprès de la présidence du Conseil*). His policy, which would prove crucial devising France's Republican model, differentiated between "useful" immigration and "harmful" immigration, on the basis of class division.[185] The policy identified a lack of industrial and farm workers and an excess of liberal, trade and artisan professionals. In practice, it promoted the institutionalisation and pseudo-rationalisation of a phenomenon already in place which involved "placing" foreign workers in places where the capital needed the cheapest labour; places deemed unfit for the developing and demanding middle

184 Barthes, *Mythologies,* p. 187.

185 Patricke Weil, *La France et ses étrangers: L'aventure d'une politique de l'immigration de 1938 à nos jours*, Paris, Editions Calmann-Lévy, 1991, pp. 42-48.

classes. The majority of foreigners were given access to industrial, agricultural or mining work, contributing to the visibility of the representation of foreigners as manual labourers. As a consequence, the immigrant came to be associated with working class professions rather than middle or upper class professions. Additionally, in developed capitalist countries such as France or Britain, the populations of emigration countries were judged according to the capitalist, industrial or consumerist developments of their respective countries of origins. The utility of these foreign workers was known only to the industry that employed them. Beyond that, they were represented more as masses of "swamping beggars" likened to waste rather than an industrial asset.[186]

The fact that the "Estonian architect" which Philippe de Villiers mentions alongside the "Polish plumber" did not become a similar myth confirms the ongoing association of immigration with the working class.[187] Beyond the contextual elements, the "Polish plumber" refers to discursive practices already well established.[188] What does this say about language in the social formation of meaning? Firstly, it shows that although it is basically not structured and fixed as assumed by Saussure or Barthes, neither it is random. Signs may appear to arise in random associations but their significations are formed through a dynamics of constant referrals, bringing about a reduction of meaning which in turn, through an ever present opening, joins in the game of significations. Whether it is taken up in the further formation or reproduction of social signification is certainly dependent

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186 In *Troubadours, Trumpeters, troubled Makers: Lyricism, Nationalism, and Hybridity in China and its Others*, Dorham, NCA, Duke University Press, 1996, Gregory B. Lee shows how the American 'Republican Model' had been functioning in a similar way and in correlation with discourses of national integration from the mid-nineteenth to early twentieth century regarding cheap Chinese labour: "the pragmatism of a minority of American capitalists" was easily conciliated with the generalised representations of dangerous "floods" of Chinese immigrants through a racist national policy of integration which was devised to select those fit to eventually become Americans (see pp. 182-199). This policy shows the ambivalence, if not the hypocrisy, of 'liberalised' capitalism which perceives workers simply as disembodied "productive resources" turning away from their workers in the face of what was obviously considered a valid nationalist and racist political agenda of social engineering.

187 Villiers, *"La grande triche du oui"*, Interview, *Le Figaro*, 15 March 2005.

188 The facts that France had been a regular destination for Polish workers throughout the twentieth century, and that Poland is also a much larger country (in terms of population and territory) than Estonia, must have played a role in the different fates of the two expressions.

on ideological intention and/or its potential for such social significance. Secondly, the process of the formation of myths also means that the system of such formation is neither an inclusive nor an exclusive system (this being a formal contradiction in ensemblist-identitary logic), but a dynamic system which functions simultaneously through selection and reproduction.

In order to make sense of the complexity of the social world, of the social formation of meaning, closed conceptions seem insufficient. Structuralist semiology used by Barthes in his analysis of myths is partly based on closed objects and leads to a one-way linear causality between the different levels of meaning. To avoid this, the system of the social production of meaning should be conceived as an open, dynamic system. French philosopher Edgar Morin argues for a paradigmatic change, from a paradigm of simplification which dissociates the subject from the object (a conception mirrored in the semiotic categories of 'signified' and 'signifier') to a paradigm encompassing the complex fabric of the natural and social world:

> "[...] au paradigme de disjonction/réduction/unidimensionnalisation, il faudrait substituer un paradigme de distinction/conjonction qui permette de distinguer sans disjoindre, d'associer sans identifier ou réduire. Ce paradigme comporterait un principe dialogique et translogique, qui intégrerait la logique classique tout en tenant compte de ses limites *de facto* (problèmes de contradictions) et *de jure* (limites du formalisme). Il porterait en lui le principe de l'*Unitas multiplex*, qui échappe à l'Unité abstraite du haut (holisme) et du bas (réductionnisme)."[189]

Morin suggests that the first point of articulation of such a substitution can be found in the concept of the open system, the details of were sketched out in the critical appraisal of structuralist semiotics. One could argue this approach leads to a new holism in the sense that there is no isolation between the *represented* units

189 "[...] the paradigm of disjunction/reduction/unidimensionalisation should be replaced by a paradigm of distinction/conjunction which allows distinction without disjunction, and association without identification or reduction. This paradigm would include a dialogical and translogical principle which would integrate classical logic while taking into account its *de facto* (problems of contradictions) and *de jure* (limitations of formalism) limitations. It would incorporate the principle of the *Unitas multiplex*, which escapes abstract Unity, whether high (holism) or low (reductionism)." Edgar Morin, *Introduction à la pensée complexe*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 2005 [1990], p. 23.

composing the system.[190] Yet this would be a misconception or an inadequate qualification of the 'validity' of an open system as the system's validity is confirmed by its "paradigmatological value":

> "[….] [C]oncevoir tout objet et entité comme clos entraîne une vision du monde classificationnelle, analytique, réductionniste, une causalité unilinéaire. C'est bien cette vision qui fait excellence dans la physique du XVIIe au XIXe siècle, mais aui aujourd'hui, avec les approfondissements et les avancées vers la complexité, fait eau de toute part. Il s'agit en fait d'opérer un renversement épistémologique à partir de la notion de système ouvert."[191]

Common figures of speech such as metaphors seem to present such an open system as they transfer the meaning of a name or a sentence to an object or a group of objects. It bears no semiotic sign of the process of analogy or substitution, as comparisons do for instance.[192] But most importantly, although certain metaphors have become worn out, the full process of the "metaphoricity of metaphors" corresponds to the creation of social meaning. In his seminal work *The Rule of Metaphor*, Paul Ricœur shows how meaning is produced and reproduced across levels and categories of discourse through the living power of the metaphor as "the conjunction of fiction and redescription".[193] The fictional aspect of metaphors relates to the way human beings experience reality: as this reality is elusive, fictional

190 This relates to aspects of theory-laden scientific observation. See Karl Popper, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery*, New York, Basic Books, 1959.

191 "Conceiving all objects and entities as closed leads to a vision of the world which is classificatory, analytical, reductionist and to a unilinear causality. This vision founded the success of physics from the seventeenth to nineteenth centuries, but today, as increased depths are reached and progress moves towards complexity, it is bursting at the seams. It is a question of performing an epistemological overhaul with the notion of open system as a starting point." Morin, *Introduction à la pensée complexe*, p. 33.

192 Other common figures of speech, such as the metonymy or synecdoche, operate a transfer either from a whole entity to one of its attributes (as in metonymy; 'the blue' standing for 'the sky') or from part of it to the whole and vice versa, as in synecdoches. Synecdoches are numerous in political and media discourses: names of states regularly appear instead of the names of governments, political representatives or sports teams. Conversely, the names of capital cities often replace the names of government representatives, or if considered a metonymy, this figure of speech transfers the meaning of a political or economic institution situated in the city to the name of the city itself.

193 Paul Ricœur, *The Rule of Metaphor: The Creation of Meaning in Language*, Robert Czerny et al. [trans.], London, Routledge, 2003 [1975], p. 291.

elements are necessary to organise it in the form of narratives.[194] Redescription refines the notion of identity: a metaphor is not simply the copy of what it refers to; it is a transfer of the same to the other (in time, in form, etc.).

Applying these considerations to a structuralist model, one would need to align all the possible levels of discourse and set them in a layered, parallel and relational network. What would appear in fact is a structural complexity and not a system making sense of complexity. The complexity of such a network would at least amount to the square number of each unit of discourse multiplied by the different layers. A tremendous piece of engineering would be required to achieve such a complex model, but even if this were possible, it would fail to constitute an *open* system. To understand why, the fabric of the social imaginary can usefully be compared to the functioning of self-similarity in mathematics. If one considers the social meaning of "identity" and applies to it the same function again and again, the "thing" which is created through this cycle bears a self or auto-reference and a hetero-reference without contradiction: with the same function it leads to different formulations. This is what Ricœur presents as the "fragility of identity": maintaining oneself though time is a "complex game" played between "identity *idem*" (the same) and "identity *ipse*" (the self). In other words it is the recurrent transfer of a represented "sameness" though the passing of time acting on "selfness".[195] The social formation of identity is an act involving such a level of complexity that no structural system is able to sustain or program in itself what could be called the inputs and outputs and how these inputs and outputs function.

In this way, a more visual way of representing this complexity is precisely as a fabric which is continuously woven by social interaction. The French expression *tisser des liens*, suggests exactly this process as it translates literally as "to weave links", while it is an extended metaphor which means to create ties between people .

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194 Ricœur argues that language is in fact part of the process of experiencing human reality because of what he terms the expressibility of experience: "To bring [experience] into language is not to change it into something else, but, in articulating and developing it, to make it become itself." Ricœur, *Hermeneutics and the Human Science*, John B. Thompson [ed. and trans.], Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1981, p. 115.

195 Ricœur, *La mémoire, l'histoire, l'oubli*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 2000, p. 98.

In this way the expression *tisser des liens* point to the way social meaning is produced and reproduced. A particular social signification or set of significations, such as the national imaginary, is continually being socially ravelled and unravelled, according to a particular *modus operandi* of weaving the strands of imaginary significations.[196] This mode is what includes or allows certain associations and excludes or hides others. In this mode, the means of production and the product are intimately related, changing roles and functions, and so on. In order to reproduce itself, the pattern of a given social signification has to *make sense*. It can only make sense if it is corroborated by the way other strands are woven. As a consequence there is a self-similarity, or a self-reference as part of the process in the reproduction of social meaning in such a way that strands are composed into a pattern. In respect to the hegemony of certain social significations, such as the national imaginary, these dominant significations are not only reproduced within themselves; if they were, they would "die out" for lack of resources.

In addition to the self-referential process, there is a process of supplying strands which is in fact a correlate to the self-referential process. The supply of strands is the social recognition of the validity of the weaving pattern and its consequent reproduction. To a certain extent, the fabric of social significations appears as an open self-regulatory system, an "auto-eco-system" consisting of the nexus, skeins and threads of significations; a fabric experiencing the social world to reality.

196 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*; Castoriadis, *L'institution imaginaire*.

– Part 2 –
The Imaginary Space

1. Dimensions of Culture

The metaphor of the social formation of meaning as the weaving of threads understands society itself – meaning *any* human community – as the *density* of actual processes of weaving. The system of the imaginary associates the threads and strings, the designs as well as the designers, the craftsmen as well as the end user, dynamically spiralling out, forming and informing each other. In other words, "the social imaginary is […] the creation of significations and the creation of the images and figures that support these significations."[197] The complex formation of meaning in language is representative of this dynamics:

> "Language is in and through two indissociable dimensions or components. Language is *langue* to the extent that is signifies, that is to say, to the extent that it refers to a magma of significations. Language is a *code* to the extent that it organizes and organizes itself in an identitary manner, that is to say, to the extent that it is a system of ensembles (or of ensemblizable relations) [...]"[198]

It follows that the foundations of all meaning are multidimensional as became apparent in the earlier discussion of the relational association of the dimensions of language. This relates to the concept of symbolling used in anthropology to define "culture" which consists in the *act* of giving or adding meaning (i.e. a symbol) to things.[199] Putting these different terminologies in parallel presents the social world – the world according to human beings – as the relation of its composing

197 Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution*, p. 238.

198 Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution*, p. 238.

199 Castoriadis argues that "[t]he relation between a signification and its supports (images or figures) is the only precise sense that can be attached to the term 'symbolic' […]." *The Imaginary Institution*, p. 238.

dimensions.[200] As Leslie White defines it, culture is to a certain extent the totality of symbolling phenomena:

> "[...] '[C]ulture' is the name of a distinct order, or class, of phenomena, namely things and events that are dependent upon the exercise of a mental ability, peculiar to the human species, that we have termed 'symbolling.' To be more specific, culture consists of material objects-tools, utensils, ornaments, amulets, etc. – acts, beliefs, and attitudes that function in contexts characterized by symbolling. It is an elaborate mechanism, an organization of exosomatic ways and means employed by a particular animal species, man, in the struggle for existence or survival"[201]

The important part of White's approach is the central involvement of human beings which, although sometimes insinuated, is usually left out in conceptual elaborations related to the study of the social-historical world. Culture and society are not entities within themselves; they are entirely dependent on their elaboration by and through the social world.[202] Conscious of this, White defines the *nature* of culture in evolutionary terms but assigns culture only to the human world, dissociating it from the natural world.[203] Multiple influences have shaped White's conceptualisation of culture, of which two are apparent here.[204] The first is the distinction between object and subject which has informed his opposition between nature and culture. The second is a form of social Darwinism, which posits culture as the nature of human

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200 This once more reminds us of the properties of self-similarity as they appear in fractal geometry, each aspect appearing as an approximate copy (as Ricoeur's "redescription" in metaphors would have it) of the other, the scale of geometry corresponding to the dimensions presented here. See the ground breaking study of mathematician Benoît B. Mandelbrot, *The Fractal Geometry of Nature*, New York, W. H. Freeman, 1982.

201 Leslie White, *The Science of Culture: A Study of Man and Civilization*, New York, Farrar, Straus, 1949, p. 363.

202 See e.g. John H. Moore, "The Culture Concept as Ideology", in *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 1, No. 3, 1974, pp. 537-549.

203 Certain notions in contemporary anthropology lead to a less distinctive separation between culture as symbolling and nature through the notion, for instance, of "iconicity". See Robert Bednarik, "The Origins of Symbolling", working paper presented at the virtual symposium "The Criteria of Symbolicity", Open Semiotics Ressource Centre, <http://www.semioticon.com/virtuals/symbolicity/origins.html> [last accessed 07.10.2010]

204 On a critical presentation of White's anthropology, see Richard A. Barrett, "The Paradoxical Anthropology of Leslie White", in *American Anthropologist*, no. 91, 1989, pp. 986-999.

survival.[205] It shows the crystallisation of certain ideas entrenched in anthropology but also in the general view on the organisation of the social world.[206]

If one refers to definitions of the 'jungle concept' of culture of the late nineteenth century, at the time when scholarly disciplines of the study of the human world where being rationalised, the natural element of culture is not directly apparent:

> "Culture, or civilization, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."[207]

Edward Tylor's definition is often described as one of the oldest definitions of culture.[208] It presents itself as a totality, encompassing all aspects of the social world. However, Tylor primarily applies this definition to primitive cultures which are only distantly related in space or time to modern European civilisation. That does not mean Tylor does not draw parallels between primitive cultures and his own culture which he does inscribe in the totality, assumed as universal. But he limits the possibility of applying the anthropological methodology which stems from his definition of culture to the advanced capitalist industrial society. This allows Tylor's culture to remain in fact anthropologically distinct and superior. Tylor consequently adopts a notion of evolution into his methodology as he represents advanced societies as mature while describing the attributes of primitive cultures as child-like (despite acknowledging the equal intelligence of their respective members). Tylor's own methodology was embedded in a universalistic approach which although cautious, renders his conception of culture better applicable to what he perceived as simple holistic cultures.[209]

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205 Despite bearing Charles Darwin's name, social Darwinism diverges from Darwin's own analysis of the limits if applying his evolutionary theory of natural selection to the social world. As an essentialist adaptation of natural selection, social darwinism ignores Darwin's introduction of the notion of sympathy in *The Descent of Man, and Selection in Relation to Sex*, [2nd ed.], London, John Murray, 1982.

206 The correlation of nation in culture with race in biology, which is one of the dominant association of ideas in the history of modern ideas, follows a similar train of thought.

207 Edward Tylor, *Primitive Culture*, New York, J.P. Putnam's Sons, 1920 [1871], p. 1.

208 Ziauddin Sardar, and Boris van Loon [Eds.], *Cultural Studies for Beginners*, Cambridge, Icon Books, 1997, p. 4.

209 See Robert H. Lowie, "Edward Tylor: Obituary", in *American Anthropologist*, New Series Vol. 19, No. 2, 1917, pp. 262-268. Available online at the *American Ethnography Quasiweekly* website: <http://www.americanethnography.com/article.php?id=9> [last accessed 19.09.2010].

The above two descriptions of culture as complex wholes more easily account for 'other' cultures as their complexity is considered less so compared to 'our' culture (in the singular form). Explanatory elements for this dissociation do not appear at first glance in the conscious and cautious conceptual frameworks of anthropologists which to a certain extent succeed in making sense of the inherent aporia of cultural definitions. Nevertheless, some traces hint toward ideological presuppositions of the dominant self-representations of advanced capitalist societies. The most obvious is the distinction between nature and culture, in the sense that culture is considered to be what differentiates human beings from other terrestrial beings. Culture, as the ability of symbolling, is considered to be the privilege of humankind. This is not simply a statement of quality: it is associated with the idea that ('our') culture is superior to nature. In short, the advanced technological, industrial and scientific techniques embody the idea of progress from 'participatory' and 'primitive' cultures (in the sense that these cultures perceive themselves as a part of the world) to a culture of domination of the forces of nature. This in turn is embedded in a cosmology which establishes the superior quality of culture in general and of its Western capitalist and modernist form in particular. It is in its ideological relation to nature that the superiority of the said culture expresses – in part – its particularity. [210]

The terms which describe and rationalise cultures in Tylor's and White's definitions do not include the fundamental ideas, beliefs, habits and customs which are defined in modern societies as politics and economy. White's definition is even less comprehensive than Tylor's in this respect. Politics and economy, alongside culture are two of the three main fields of the rationalisation of modern western societies. Culture is hence disengaged from its all-encompassing attributes leaving a space for politics and economy which, in anthropological discourse, appear to be reserved for "advanced societies".[211] The corollary of this is that politics and economy become the rational, progressive fields of modern western societies which, against the

210 This does not mean that only capitalist culture has developed a sense of superiority. In fact, as Castoriadis contends, it is the general tendency to perceive one's culture as superior and unique. See Castoriadis "Réflexions sur le racisme", in *Le monde morcelé : Les carrefours du labyrinthe 3*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1990, pp. 29-46.

211 See e.g. Carolyn Fluehr-Lobban, "Frederick Engels and Leslie White: The Symbol versus the Role of Labor in the Origin of Humanity", in *Dialectical Anthropology* Vol.11, No. 1, 1986, pp. 119-126.

"complex whole" (or should one say messy?), are the arrangements of *reason* and *order*, believed to be the unique prerogatives of *civilisation*.[212]

The term culture, recontextualised in its relation to politics and economy no longer describes an universal complex whole. Rather, it describes everything which is not considered part of the two other fields. It is defined through other notions such as "education" or "the arts" or when considered alongside habits or customs, it is linked to distinct, reduced or refined social groups, as in "national", "ethnic", "religious" or "class" culture. At first, this shift does not exclude the anthropological understanding of the term. It establishes a distance which could be represented by the reduction of the scope of the meaning of culture as if the meaning of culture had shifted through a discursive funnel. As it is distanced from evolutionary holistic conceptions – which despite their aporias, should be credited with situating culture in the *longue durée* and suggesting a historical relativity of social meanings – culture loses its radical potential. The production and transformation of social meaning is also funnelled away from the complex space of culture to the rationalised fields of politics and economy. The modern imaginary therefore appears impermeable to its perception as a sort of ecosystem of significations which are being constantly negotiated. The gradual institutionalisation of nationalist significations in the late modern period emanates from this reified world-view, which it in turn reproduces. These fixed representations, of which commemorative monuments are material tokens, hide away the process of their conscious formation, limiting the potential for negotiating their meaning, given that the possibility for negotiating their meaning exists only *a posteriori*. Although national, these meanings have rarely been

212 Although the term civilisation may be considered equivalent to that of culture, it usually denotes an 'advanced' culture. Rather that being described as primitive, civilisations are more honourably described as ancient whe contrasting them with modern Western civilisation. With evolutionary theories, civilisation has come to describe the highest form the evolution of social societies. Moreover, at a time when colonisation was in full swing, one of its central ideological justifications was precisely the *civilising* mission. The prerogatives of the modern Western civilisation are indeed that of being the *only* civilisation. Under the somewhat distorted influence of cultural relativism in the late twentieth century, a different view was being popularised through the phrase "the clash of civilisations". Its most prominent advocate was Samuel P. Huntington with his book *The Clash of Civilisations and the Remaking of the World Order*, New York, Simon & Schuster, 1996. In contrast to Fukuyama's thesis on the end of history, Huntington argued for a culturalist reading of international relations in the post-Cold war world. The term did not gain in complexity, but acquired a simplified dominant religious connotation, symptomatic of the increased religious tone in political discourse since the late 1980's.

negotiated outside state institutions: a large amount of the people supposedly concerned or recognised by national representations seldom contribute to the decision of institutionalising such representations. Consequently, such representations do not gain a first hand shared legitimacy based on their actual social significance, but through a state-legitimised institutionalisation. Their social recognition is therefore only successful when their significations are themselves taken up as internalised terms for further negotiations or recognition of social meaning. The density of the invention of national traditions and institutions in the second half of the nineteenth century reflects the nationalist motivations of the elites. It is only later that those traditions became *actual* traditions as suggested by Hobsbawm.[213]

2. The Institution of Ideology

Figuring the Forms of Ideology

Negotiations of social meanings lead to the question of the role or rather the functioning of ideology within what can be termed for now as the reproduction of social significations. Raymond Williams breaks the use of the term ideology into two separate levels:

> "(a) the *formal and conscious beliefs* of a class or other social group – as in the common usage of 'ideological' to indicate general principles or theoretical positions or, as often unfavourably, dogmas; or (b) the characteristic *world-view or general perspective* of a class or other social group, which will include formal and conscious beliefs but also less conscious, less formulated attitudes, habits and feelings, or even unconscious assumptions, bearings and commitments."[214]

According to Williams, it is the first definition that is the most prevalent in sociological discourse. The second definition does not exactly operate on a different

213 Hobsbawm points out that these new traditions occupied a "much smaller space" than the space occupied by what could be termed private and sub-cultural traditions. See Hobsbawm and Ranger, *The Invention of Tradition*, p. 11. In addition, Eugen Weber, in his inquiry on the forging of national unity in France also shows how a large portion of French citizens were only starting to accept their French citizenship at the end of the nineteenth century. The French national imaginary was only beginning to become national around 1900. Eugen Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1976, see pp. 113-114; 493.

214 Raymond Williams, *The Sociology of Culture*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 1995 [1981], p. 26.

level, as it includes the first definition. It is this wider and inclusive definition that Williams applies to his sociology of culture, and, by correlation, the one he uses to define culture. Such a definition of culture through ideology is characteristic of a certain Marxist trend in the social sciences.[215] Antonio Gramsci notably defined ideology and culture in such a relation, moving away from the then traditional Marxist approach.[216] Gramsci first defines ideology in the following way:

> "a scientific hypothesis which has a dynamic educational character and is verified and criticized by the actual development of history" [217]

Gramsci focused on the question of how the ruling class maintained its ideological hegemony and consequently the means available to the proletariat to overthrow the hegemony of the bourgeoisie.[218] In this perspective, Gramsci's definition of ideology moves away from the restricted sense to reach the "highest sense" which is clearly echoed in William's general definition:

> "One might say 'ideology' here, but on condition that the word is used in its highest sense of a conception of the world that is implicitly manifest in art, in law, in economic activity and in all manifestations of individual and collective life." [219]

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215 There are also two definitions of ideology one can find in Karl Marx's own writings. In earlier texts, it is defined as false consciousness or the false self conceptions. In a sense, it is a restricted meaning. See e.g. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The German Ideology*, Christopher John Arthur [ed.], New York, International Publishers, 1970. In later works, ideology is defined in a more general way, denoting the forms of social consciousness, and the set of dominant ideas which correspond to the dominant class. See e.g. Marx, *A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy*, S.W. Ryazanskaya [trans.], Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1977. See also Taras, *Ideology in a Socialist State*, p. 4.

216 This traditional approach considered the infrastructure or base (meaning the modes, forces and relations of productions) as determining the superstructure or ideological level. Gramsci suggests a co-determinant relation between the two.

217 Antonio Gramsci, *Selections from Cultural Writings*, David Forgacs and G. Nowell Smith [eds.], William Boelhower [trans], London, Lawrence & Wishart, 1985 p. 124.

218 Hegemony can be briefly defined as the organising principle which permeates throughout a given society and is based on the combination of the use of force by the ruling class and consent of the subordinate And yet, according to Gramsci, hegemony is neither culture nor ideology in a restricted sense, but rather the mode through which the domination of a class or group functions in society in connecting culture and ideology. See Gramsci, *Selection from Prison Notebooks*, Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith [eds. and trans.], New York: International Publishers, 1971, pp. 57-58, p. 80 and p. 195. Also, Raymond Williams devoted a chapter to 'hegemony' in *Marxism and Literature*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977, pp. 108-114.

219 Gramsci, "From the *Prison Notebooks*", p. 63, in Stephen Duncombe [ed.], *Cultural Resistance Reader*, London, Verso 2002, pp. 58-66. Extracts taken from Gramsci, *Selection from Prison Notebooks.*

Similarly to Williams' definitions, Gramsci's are also distinguished by the element of formality or consciousness, even if Gramsci does not separate his definitions the way Williams does. A scientific hypothesis would be based on formal and conscious representations – and therefore would correspond better to the first definitions – whereas the highest sense of ideology denotes culture or the social whole. [220]

It is worth noting that the most popular understanding of ideology usually holds a negative connotation. As Clifford Geertz contends in *The Sociology of Culture*, it is probably because the term itself has been "ideologised."[221] Such negative connotations, both in popular understanding and academic definitions, tend to benefit the viewpoint of the observer, who considers his or her perspective as objective and hence devoid of any ideology.[222] This echoes the presentation in the first chapter of methodological nationalism. Geertz turns this preconception on its head formulating a famous "parodic paradigm": "I have a social philosophy; you have political opinions; he has an ideology."[223]

Regardless of these distinctions and independently of which set of definitions is used, the problem of the relation between ideology (in its restricted sense) and culture remains to be clarified, or as Gramsci put it, it is the "problem […] of preserving the ideological unity of the entire social bloc which that ideology serves to cement and unify."[224] The complex whole of culture includes both definitions of ideology according to the level of formality and consciousness; that is to say: the complex whole includes all potential levels of formality and consciousness. The relation between ideology and culture can thus be represented in the form of a funnel in which the highest outer brim would be the cultural level and the lowest would be

220 The notion of consciousness will not be elaborated here as the enlarged psychological framework which would be needed is beyond the capacities of the present author.

221 Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture: Selected Essays*, New York, Basic Books, 1973, p. 87.

222 This negative or 'critical' connotation can be traced back to two trends, namely Marxism with its critique of dominant ideology and the "end of ideology" thesis associated to Daniel Bell which defines ideology primarily under the auspices of totalitarianism. Concerning Marxism and ideology see Stuart Hall, "The Problem of Ideology: Marxism without Guarantees" in *Journal of Communication Inquiry*, Vol. 10, No. 2, 1986, pp. 28–44.

223 Geertz, *The Interpretation of Culture*, p. 88.

224 Gramsci, "From the *Prison Notebooks*", p. 63, in Stephen Duncombe [ed.], *Cultural Resistance Reader*, London, Verso 2002, pp. 58-66. Extracts taken from Gramsci, *Selection from Prison Notebooks.*

that of the formal ideology (*Figure 1*, see below). The funnelled tube running between culture and formal ideology thus represents the gradual broadening (or narrowing) of the potential for formality and consciousness within what can be defined as general ideology. The top down perspective of the funnel (*Figure* 2) gives a wider perspective showing the pattern of inclusion/exclusion from the most inclusive and least formal cultural space to the least inclusive and most formal space of formal ideology (*Figure 2*). The in-between space of the general ideology defines the relation between culture and ideology in terms of the spiralling dynamics of the weaving and unravelling of social representations and significations. This dynamics is here represented by a spiralled grey line and can be thought of Castoridadis's "radical imaginary" which operates from a space beyond consciousness and formality (*ex nihilo*, out of nothing or nowhere) to express a new form and signification.[225]

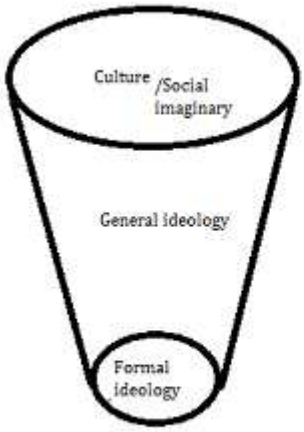

Figure 1

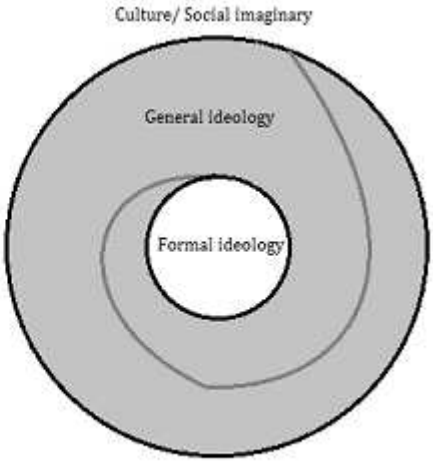

Figure 2

Castoriadis elaborates his concept of the social imaginary in relation to the creation of new forms and new significations. It is this creation that he terms the radical imaginary, and according to Castoriadis, it is this radical imaginary which defines what the imaginary or imagination primarily is:

225 Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution*, p. 359.

> "[…] l'imagination c'est ce qui nous permet de créer un *monde*, soit de nous présenter quelque chose de laquelle, sans l'imagination, nous ne saurions rien, nous ne pourrions rien dire."[226]

We can see that the radical imaginary, or rather the full potential of the imaginary occurs on the margins: it is where the process of creation or production takes place. But for Castoriadis this is only the first step of the imaginary institution of society which Castoriadis further elucidates.[227] To become formalised, the new *thing* created by the radical imaginary needs to become instituted through the process of the "instituting imaginary." The new creation is finally instituted if socially recognised as bearing signification. The "instituted imaginary" is thus constituted of recognised forms and significations which can then be reproduced or inherited through a similar but less extensive dynamics.[228]

It is clear that there are correlations and echoes between the different concepts and theories of culture, ideology and imaginary which have been reflected upon. The spherical representation of the relation between ideology and culture could also represent the different levels of discourse, the metaphoricity of metaphors or the imaginary institution of society, even though they each operate in different contexts. The two figures suggest that the analysis of formal elements can direct us to the significations they express by including general or contextual elements in which the dynamic relation occurs. Ideally, they should also direct us to their radical state. The figures also suggest that formal ideology is an ideological reduction of culture, or to put it otherwise, that the formulation of culture means the reduction of culture. But even if culture is reduced, the term culture remains a particularly ambivalent and *meaningful* word.

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226 "[…] imagination is what allows us to create for a *world* – or to present to ourselves something of which, without the imagination, we would know nothing and we could say nothing" Castoriadis, *La montée de l'insignifiance: Les carrefours du labyrinthe 4*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1996, p. 111. Translation adapted from the anonymous translation: Castoriadis, *The Rising Tide of Insignificancy*, e-book, 2003, p. 187. Available online: <http://www.notbored.org/RTI.html> [retrieved 25.10.2006]

227 The term "institution" is here thought of in its widest and indeed most radical sense, meaning all the "norms, values, languages, tools, procedures and methods of facing things and of making things, as well as, naturally, the individual." Castoriadis, *Domaines de l'homme: Les carrefours du labyrinthe 2*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1986, p. 223.

228 The usual understanding of the terms "imaginary" and "imagination" does not traditionally conceive the process of creation as their primary sense, and when it does mention it, it is usually restricted to the arts. See Castoriadis, *Domaines de l'homme*, p. 277.

The Reduction of Culture

Anthropological definitions, such as the ones presented in the previous section, tend to view culture as the complex whole which defines a particular group of people. But the political institutions which formally represent culture in a majority of established nation-states reproduce and promote a different, much less radical understanding which covers the social spaces formally left out from the fields of politics and economy.[229] In France, for instance, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs (*Ministère des Affaires Culturelles*) has been in charge of such "affairs" since its creation in 1959. In Britain, a State Secretary for Culture, Arts, Media and Sports was created in 1992. And in Poland, a Ministry of Culture and the Arts (*Ministerstwo Kultury i Sztuki*) appeared as early as 1944, before being reformed and in 2000 and 2005 by conservative governments under the name of Ministry of Culture and National Heritage (*Ministerstwo Kultury i Dziedzictwa Narodowego*).[230] For the sake of clarity, it will be assumed that all these three national institutions formulate culture in a similar way but only the case of the French ministry will be considered.[231]

The following extract from the original mission statement of the Ministry of Cultural Affairs presents the scope of its responsibilities:

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229 In fact, the first such ministry in modern nation-states was created in Nazi Germany in 1933, under the name of the Ministry for Public Enlightenment and Propaganda (*Reichsministerium für Volksaufklärung und Propaganda)* and was duplicated in 1943 by the Ministry for Popular Culture (*Ministro della Cultura Popolare*) of the Italian Social Republic, a short lived puppet state of Nazi Germany.In the USSR, the first Ministry of Culture (*Министерство культуры*) formally came into being in 1946. Despite certain common features, the aim of the ministries in fascist and totalitarian regimes was to have total control of the education, information and cultural practices of the peoples concerned. Contrary to the trend since World War 2 in liberal states, these 'original' ministries certainly defined culture as less equivocal, with a entire design of enclosed significations.

230 In July 1944, a Department of Culture and the Arts was part of the Polish committee of National Liberation (*Polski Komitet Wyzwolenia Narodowego, PKWN*), a provisional governmental body supervised by the USSR which opposed the government of the Second Republic of Poland in exile in London at the time. It was instituted as a ministry in December 1944

231 The British case would have seemed more coherent, but the postponed institutionalisation of a department of culture would have weakened the comparative analysis. Furthermore, a reading of the mission presentations on the official websites of the British department and the Polish ministry actually confirms the similarities and the transnational political behaviour in this matter. See *Department for Culture, Media and Sport*,official website: <http://www.culture.gov.uk/about_us/default.aspx> [accessed 05.11.2010]; and *Ministerstwo Kultury i Dzedzictwa Narodowego*, official website, <http://www.mkidn.gov.pl/pages/strona-glowna/ministerstwo/prawo.php> [accessed 5.11.2010]

> "Le ministère chargé des affaires culturelles a pour mission de rendre accessibles les œuvres capitales de l'humanité, et d'abord de la France, au plus grand nombre possible de français, d'assurer la plus vaste audience à notre patrimoine culturel, et de favoriser la création des œuvres de l'art et de l'esprit qui l'enrichissent."[232]

The first observation that can be made is the reduced definition of culture as "the works of art and of the mind". It still suggest a complexity but not to the high degree as the complex whole of anthropological definitions. The ministry definition also reproduces the culture/nature dichotomy, where the former is solely the works of "humanity". The cultural space the ministry manages excludes all the conditions related to the production of these works, or even the conditions of any other type of work such as industrial works. The ministry definition also aims, more humbly, at policing the access and the spread of inherited works and promoting the contemporary production of potentially similar works. Since 1997, the ministry was renamed in the Ministry of Culture and Communication (*Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication*, and its mission was slightly altered. In 2010, the official website presentation reads as follows:[233]

> "La culture est un service public. Elle est aussi un choix personnel pour chacun d'entre nous. L'Etat doit veiller à la protection d'un patrimoine architectural et artistique qui appartient à tous les français. Il convient de le rendre accessible au plus grand nombre dans les meilleures conditions. Il lui revient d'encourager la création sous toutes ses formes, d'en préserver la diversité, particulièrement dans un monde qui tend à s'uniformiser sous la pression d'intérêts économiques de plus en plus contraignants."[234]

The definition of culture, as it is expressed in this introductory paragraph, reproduces an annotated and broken-up definition of the original mission statement.

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232 "The goal of the ministry in charge of cultural affairs is to provide access for the greatest number of French people to the major works of humanity, and first and foremost those of France. The goal is also to ensure the greatest audience for our cultural heritage, and to promote the creation of the works of art and mind which enrich that heritage." Official website of the *Ministère de la culture et de la communication*, <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/historique/index.htm> [retrieved 05.11.2010].

233 All the subesquent extracts are taken from the official website of the *Ministère de la Culture et de la Communication*: <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/historique/index.htm> [retrieved 05.11.2010]

234 "Culture is a public service. It is also a personal choice for each of us. The state must keep watch over an architectural and artistic heritage which belongs to all French people. It should be made accessible to the largest number of people in the best conditions. The state's role is also to encourage all forms of creation to preserve its diversity, especially in a world which tends to become uniform under the pressure of increasingly restrictive economic interests."

The "mind" has formally disappeared, replaced by the "architectural heritage", which is much less ambivalent and wide-ranging. It also suggests that architecture is not considered an art proper. This leaving out of "mind" already reduces both architecture and art; the former because it is no longer art and the latter because it no longer encompasses architecture. The understanding therefore further reduces the formal definition of culture, and reduces its signification. The "works of humanity" have also been left out, as well as the suggestion of access for non nationals. The Ministry is now formally and solely devoted to managing the relation between the nationals and *their* heritage. This slight nuance further reduces the scope of culture compared to the first ministry definition. In addition, with the association of personal choice, culture obtains a new qualification as both a national and a private property.[235] The last sentence is particularly problematic as it creates a confusion with what follows:

> "La création est le lieu privilégié de l'expression de la liberté. L'économie de la culture ne saurait être exclusivement soumise aux lois de l'économie. Sa politique, loin de tout esprit partisan, doit s'inspirer de la conviction que la culture est non seulement une source d'épanouissement personnel mais aussi un moyen privilégié pour renforcer la cohésion sociale en donnant à chacun le sens du dialogue et la conscience de partager avec autrui les valeurs fondamentales."[236]

The confusion appears when the statement on the challenge faced by the ministry is contrasted with the demand that state policy should not be partisan policy. By saying what the ministry should take into account, the statement on culture is adopting a partisan position and the "pressure of increasingly restrictive economic interests" is rhetorically expressed as *de facto c*ommon-sense. Indeed there is a more glaringly

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235 In this sense, the question of the "privatisation of culture" often discusses it in economic terms, which is certainly important but as it is still blind to this "symbolic" privatisation which is based on the reduction of power relations, and through their specialisation often reproduce this reduced signification. See e.g., Peter B. Boorsma, Annemoon van Hemel, Niki van der Wielen [eds.], *Privatization of Culture: Experiences in the Arts, Heritage and Cultural Industries in Europ*e, Kluwer Academic Publishers, Dordrecht, 1998.

236 "The realm of creation favours the expression of liberty. The economy of culture cannot be exclusively subjected to the laws of economy. Its [the state] policy, far from any partisan spirit, must draw its inspiration from the conviction that culture is not only a source of personal fulfilment, but is also a privileged means for reinforcing social cohesion giving every individual the sense of dialogue and the awareness of sharing fundamental values with others."

confusing formulation between an “economy of culture” which does not follow the “laws of economy”.[237]

Despite the verbose definition, the formal ideology greatly reduces culture as it embeds and ravels it in economic terms. For instance, the relativist and reductive idea of property is promoted through both the elements of “personal fulfilment” and “social cohesion”. The so-called “conviction” expresses the intended effects of this “economy of culture”: the fundamental value is the fulfilment of each individual in their liberty to express how relative their creative potential is and to share this value in the celebration of the established “creations” of the nation.

This short extract is rich in significations, which cannot all be analysed here. Indeed, despite the reduction in the significance of culture, the general complexity of significations has not disappeared. All the same, the game between (dis)integrating and (dis)integrated elements – “architecture” instead of “mind” for instance, or the elements brought in from an economic discourse – grids the confusion and moves away from potential significations. But although culture is reduced, another complexity is suggested, which combines elements of the dominant ideology with elements of its criticism.[238] For example, the idea that creation should be free from any constraints is hardly a contestable idea in a liberal society, but if one sets restrictive prerequisites for such creation to be recognised, one in fact expresses a fundamental contradiction which can only be resolved if it is hidden with additional formulations, the way it is in the Ministry's description. Firstly, the notion of “creation” only applies to the productions expressed by the reduced definition of culture. Secondly, this private, individual space is suggested as the best of all places for expressing freedom. Finally, the economic constraints are introduced as common sense in the first part of the text. As a consequence, it comes as no surprise that the discourse of economy is so prominent in the text.

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237 The Ministry's website devotes one webpage to the “economy of culture”, where it is explained how culture is “considered as a true economic activity”, <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/historique/> [accessed 05.10.2010]

238 In *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme*, Luc Boltanski and Eve Chiapello show how the “spirit” of capitalism has been reinvigorated since the 1960s-70s by the integration of elements of what the authors call the “artist criticism” (*critique artiste*). This capacity of integrating and thus disintegrating its criticisms is representative of hegemonic ideologies and dominant imaginaries. See Luc Bolatanski and Eve Chiapello, *Le nouvel esprit du capitalisme*, Paris, Editions Gallimard, 1999, pp.287-290.

Nevertheless, it still follows that the production of artistic commodities is free to adjust itself to economic value.[239] And such an adjustment means precisely that creation is restricted by the laws of economy. Moreover, it points to a social imaginary which is itself constrained, ruled one might say, by economic institutions. Between the formulation of culture as a complex whole in the second half of the nineteenth century and the political institutionalisation of culture in the twentieth century, there has been an ideological reduction of its signification. It is not simply the matter of formulation and the marginalisation of something as potentially radical, such as an all inclusive definition of culture. This reduction is cultural in the Foucaldian sense, as exclusion, as it confines its significations through numerous and yet limiting associations.[240]

3. The Design of Patterns

The analysis of the formulations of culture provides a definition of the dynamics of the imaginary in terms of the integration and disintegration of threads of signification, and the association and disassociation between was is actual and was is potential. This (un)ravelling of threads of significations is made sense of in the case of the radical imaginary through the formulation or reformulation of hidden, inherited significations. The imaginary can consequently be represented as the space which comprehends this dynamics in its totality. This space is construed by the self-organisation of the open system of social significations, and consequently cannot be ideally delimited in accountable terms.

But the formula of a self-organising system (or "auto-eco-system") needs to be clarified on two accounts. Firstly, it is based on a formal paradox: if such a system is considered as an entity which can be singled out, it means that it is organised in and by itself, leaving no space for the open qualification of its system. Secondly, it formulates a tautology: the conception of the open system as defined above has been

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239 This merchandising of culture is already represented in the nineteenth century in what is, according to Jeremy Rifkin, the oldest cultural industry. Tourism, with Thomas Cook becomes the first industry selling cultural experiences, beyond the price of the means which actually allowed people to travel. See Jeremy Rifkin, *The Age of Acces: The New Culture of Hypercapitalism Where All of Life is a Paid-for Experience*, Jeremy P. Hatcher/G.P. Putnam's and Sons, New York, 2000.

240 On culture defined as discursive processes exclusion see Foucault, *L'ordre du discourse: Leçon inaugurale au Collège de France prononcée le 2 décembre 1970*, Paris, Gallimard, 1971.

interpreted as an "eco-system", which is precisely defined as a self-organising principle. Yet, it would be an error to dismiss these two accounts as mutual exclusive. Indeed, not only are they both correct as far as the present elucidation is concerned, but they are mutually supportive in that they resolve one another. The first paradox expresses the signification of the self in the tautology, and concurrently, the second disentangles the formal paradox. In other words, the "auto" and "eco" of the system inform and form each other.

For further clarification, this conceptualisation of the formation of social significations as an open system of (un)ravelling threads of signification, needs to be delimited into a logical section. Despite the axiomatic paradox, the delineation will partly shed light on the complexity of the process. It will also attempt to *make sense* of the relations between the various concepts which have so far contributed to the elucidation of the imaginary space. In the perspective of establishing the imaginary as a space of inquiry, the subsequent section will form the basis for analytic strategies for a further inquiry into nationalism. It should nonetheless be noted that these delimitations are rationalisations, and as such are fictitious, although they remain didactic or rather deictic, as they indicate or point to what they represent.[241]

In reality, inquiries are always taken up *in medias res.* As a result, a primary limitation is created by the postulation of a *tabula rasa* as the beginning of the process of forming social significations. As social significations are indeed social, a secondary is then created through the postulation of at least two indivisible social entities able to be put in relation to one another. These entities, which are considered to be individual human beings, operate as "acting powers" of the weaving of social significations.[242] As acting powers, entities in the social world exist and act in power relations relative to their history. Consequently, and in correlation to the first two postulates, a third limitation comes from the postulation of the social entities as primarily equal and fully conscious. Each entity will thus project and represent one unique and indivisible thread, meaning they are not socially significant before being

241 Castoriadis explains how the social imaginary "is not categorizable by means of grammatical categories (and behind these, logical and ontological categories)." Yet, words (or categories) can still aim at expressing the "not categorizable." *The Imaginary Institution*, p.369.

242 This concept, "puissances d'agir", is translated and borrowed from Frédéric Lordon, *Capitalisme et servitude: Marx et Spinoza*, Paris, La Fabrique éditions, 2010, p. 19.

woven with other threads and reproduced in a way that forms a social tie. While aiming at expressing social complexity, the fourth limitation comes from the postulate of the simplicity of the social ideology: all entities will produce the simplest possible patterns and will directly be tied to two other entities at most. To further this rationalisation, a fifth and final limitation is introduced through the consideration that there is only one way for these threads to intersect, which limits the patterns in which they can actually be woven by the social entities.

Considering only two entities, 1 and 2, the process appears very simple as there is only one possible pattern: the pattern of the social signification the social signification (*Figure 3*). If one entity produces A and the other B, and the pattern can only be AB (or BA), then the thread of the social signification would simply be its reproduction.

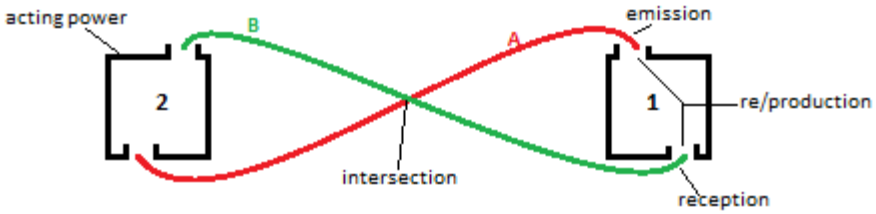

Figure 3

When a third entity (3), which produces the thread C, is added, the complexity grows exponentially (*Figure 4*). In order to have the simplest social fabric with three entities, the third entity should connect only to one of the two others (C to B in *Figure 4*). This means that all other possible patterns become potential patterns in contrast to the ones already being woven. If C is only woven with B, the actual weaving patterns (or formal ideology) are BABC for entity 2, AB for 1 and CB for 3. The social signification (or general ideology) is then expressed as the reproduction of BABC. The dominance of B, which is woven both with A and C, makes B the integrating element of the social fabric. Other significations that would undermine the dominance of B are excluded. All acting powers having applied the paradigm of simplicity, the actual patterns are only a part of the *potential* patterns which the present configuration would allow. The social signification, in contrast to the first situation where there were only two entities, does not express the full

potential of the social significations (the imaginary), which also comprises AC, ABAC and CACB, as well as the most equal relation between all significations as in ABC.

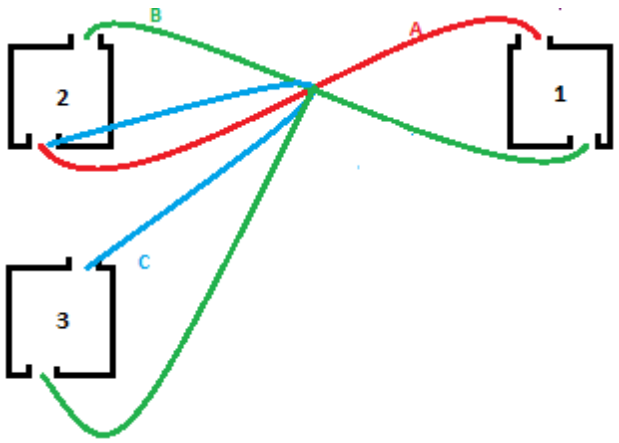

Figure 4

Following the same parameters, if a fourth entity is added (4), expressing D, and is only tied to A, the weaving patterns are as follows: ABAD for 1, BABC for 2, CD for 3 and DA for 4 (*Figure 5)*. The thread of the social signification would thus become ABADABCB. In this configuration, neither the simple BC, AD or CD are expressed, nor any other in which C or D would be the integrating elements. The potential of the radical imaginary has increased as well as the complexity of the general and formal ideologies. B is no longer the only integrating element as it does not integrate D, as A does in the social signification of *Figure 5*. Consequently, the significant association AB becomes the dominant or integrating *signification* of this social group. Between *Figure 4* and *Figure 5*, social integration has shifted from an integrating element (B) to the level of an integrating signification (the association of A and B). The social imaginary of the group in *Figure 5* would allow five other such configurations. Put differently, with the same number of elements, six different "societies" are possible while sharing the same minimalistic imaginary.

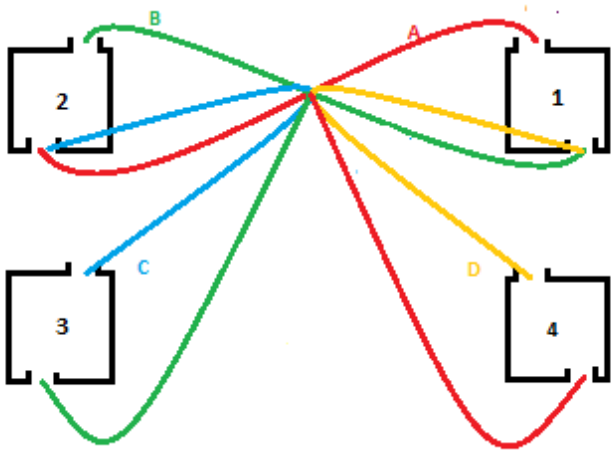

Figure 5

If the limitations stipulated before these models were set out are removed, a historicity would have to be included which would in itself tear down the possibility for any other limitations and prohibit a rationalisation of a social fabric, as was attempted above. The impossibility in itself highlights the cultural irrationality anchored in all social beings.[243] Nevertheless, this exercise enables different elements of the framework to be situated. If the paradigm of simplicity is considered to be a restricted ideology, ideology then functions as the lever which reduces and expands the aperture of the system, defining the extent to which an individual consciously weaves, the extent to which that individual is 'open minded' to use a common phrase, or further still, the extent to which the self is autonomous.[244] But the case of an entirely open aperture would mean an overexposure leading to the disintegration of the system into social disorder. The fact that most potential significations are unconsciously woven safeguards the consciousness of individuals from such disorders. The French expression *garde-fou* – translating a "safeguard" – would be particularly suitable here. By correlation, social alienation, in the Marxist conception, should be considered as the opposite of disorder: a constrained

243 Edward T. Hall, *Au-delà de la culture*, Marie-Hélène Hatchuel [trans.], Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1979 [1976], p. 214,

244 If approached in terms of a network, this would simply be a measure of how much an individual is connected. As far as social autonomy is concerned, it is rather in terms of the consciousness of social significations than in connections that autonomy is expressed.

underexposure which limits the autonomy of the self.[245] As social relations are relations of power, they are rarely equitable relations. An ideology can be considered one's own, but can be limited in a number of ways which are not determined by the individual self. Inherited significations, patterns of thought promoted by institutions, such as education or commemoration, or patterns imposed by more powerful acting powers tend to limit the less powerful to consensual reproduction. This results in alienating the self from a more autonomous production of social significations, even if such production is a self-integrated, interpreted reproduction.

All of these processes ultimately take place in the space of individual social entities. The only such objective and subjective entities in the socio-historical world are individual human beings or individual beings in general. They are individual auto-eco-systems, which are conjunctively acting powers in the physical and imaginary spaces. In general terms, they are producers and reproducers of social significations, senders and recipients of social representations. In more metaphorical terms, they are the weavers (*auto*), the suppliers (*eco*) and the weaving looms (*system*) of the entire dynamics of the social fabric.

In this conceptualisation, a sign makes sense only if it is shared in the social-historical world, meaning if it is recognised or reproduced by more than one acting power. The sense which is produced in this way is the impetus for the dynamics which is directed to a signification. It becomes a full sense when it completes the cycle by supplying the acting powers with social signification. A signification is therefore an association of at least two senses. A dominant or autonomous signification is in that respect a socially instituted association (which means it is socially recognised) which attracts senses and therefore supplies more signification than was formulated. It is a strip of the social fabric dense enough to become a focal point. This puts the dominant or autonomous signification at the heart of the process of integration and disintegration of social imaginary significations enabling it to be continuously reproduced in the game of significations.

245 On Marx's own conception of alienation see e.g. Marx, *Capital*, David McLellan [ed.], Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995, pp. 383-386; Bertell Ollman, *Alienation: Marx's Conception of Man in Capitalist Society*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1971.

In this conceptualisation, ideology is considered as the potential formality/consciousness of the patterns involved, the extent of which determine the amount of power or control the whole process is subjected to. Control will therefore be defined through the notion of autonomy as the radius of formal ideology, as it is represented in the funnel diagrams in *Figure 1* and *Figure 2*. Control is further exercised in the original production or wilful reproduction and reception of patterns and their (re)presentations. In contrast, heteronomy is the coercion or the pressure exercised on the individual by institutionalised and promoted patterns. The radical imaginary originates from the liminal spaces between autonomous and heteronomous spaces of ideology.[246] In other words, radicality starts by peering in from behind instituted significations of the social fabric. As nationalism is a late modern social imaginary, it also means that the negotiations which have formed the nationalist grid of significations originated in associations of instituted significations with radical significations. Once these radical significations were instituted, they have formed focal points which autonomy reproduces nationalism as a social imaginary. In the next chapters, we will investigate formulations which point to such focal points of articulation.

246 This echoes the concept of "third space theory" which originated in literary studies. See Henry Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*, N. Donaldson-Smith [trans.], Oxford, Blackwell, 1991 [1974]; Homi K. Bhabba, *The Location of Culture*, London, Routledge, 1994. See Chapter 4, Part 3.1 of the present work.

– Aperture –
De Ligaturis

In the modernist trend of nationalism studies, it has become habitual to date the emergence of nationalism in Europe and beyond, to some time between the late eighteenth century and the early nineteenth century.[247] The central event which has become the paramount example of the formation of nation-states is the French Revolution. The decades around it most certainly show a dense set of radical significations for French history, but also on a global scale and beyond nationalism. A certain number of those significations had matured for centuries and were by the end of the eighteenth century, ripe enough to contest instituted power relations – which is the case of the significations bore by the republican imaginary, both liberal and authoritarian. Some significations from the *Ancien Régimes* were disintegrated in the revolutionary breach, while others, conjoint or contingent to radical significations, were reintegrated in the nebula of the age of revolutions.[248]

As formal ideology has been set at the centre of our strategic approach, the word "nation" appears as valid analytical origin. It is nevertheless important to bear in mind that it is simply an analytical starting point and not the historical origin of nationalism.

> "There was no first nationalist. Neither there was any single moment at which people who previously had no idea of nation and no political aspirations or ideological preferences for their own country suddenly began to think in nationalist terms. Rather, several different threads of historical change came together to produce nationalism."[249]

Although Calhoun does not develop the metaphor, we can see how his approach supports an analytical strategy based on the metaphor of the social *fabric*.

In consequence, the premises in the following chapter are premises on two levels: contextual and analytical. The contextual premises are those of the illustrations

247 Calhoun, *Nationalism*, Minneapolis, University of Minnesota Press, 1997, p. 9.

248 In reference to Eric J. Hobsbawm's *The Age of Revolution: 1789-1848*, New York, Vintage Books, 1996 [1962]

249 Calhoun, *Nationalism*, p. 9.

which are associated with Britain, France and Poland. The analytical premises denote the levels of penetration within this larger space in which Britain, France and Poland make sense from a nationalistic point of view.

The aim is to elucidate the socio-historical moments, or the conjunctures which have in a transcultural manner, allowed the ravelling of nationalist imaginaries. The negotiations of social meanings, which involve the (un)ravelling of threads and the (dis)integration of social ties, set up evolving grids of significations. Once these grids seem to be set, their historical longevity or impression depends on how tight the ties which capture their significations are and how much contextual signification is constructed around these ties. From a prospective point of view, the latter significations can be perceived as the content of the paradigmatic grid.

The term nation (*naród* in Polish) derives from the Latin notion of birth (*nationem*, "that which is born" or *natus*, "be born").[250] An overview of the etymological dictionaries in the three vernacular languages to which our illustrations relate (English, French and Polish) presents us with similar definitions prior to the nineteenth century.[251] The different definitions are significantly unrelated to suggest an unrefined use compared to the later and contemporary singular density attributed to the "nation".[252]

In the early modern period, prior to the age of revolution, "nation" was a general and polysemic term used in political discourse in reference to a group of citizens under a common law or to an entire population which could be united by a common government, a territory, a language or any one of these attributes.[253] In comparison with the non comprehensive "features of the rhetoric of nation" elaborated by Calhoun, which lists ten complex bullet points, these various uses of the term appear

250 *Online Etymology Dictionary,* <http://www.etymonline.com/index.php?search=nation&searchmode=none> [accessed 14.12.2010]

251 *Encyclopædia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite*, Chicago, Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010; *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, [4th Edition], 1762, The ARTFL Project, "Dictionnaires d'autrefois", University of Chicago, <http://artflx.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/dicos/pubdico1look.pl?strippedhw=nation> [accessed 02.09.2010]; Wiesław Boraś, *Słownik etymologiczny języka polskiego* [Etymological Dictionary of the Polish language], Wydawnictwo Literackie, 2005, p. 352.

252 In the Bible, the word nation could refer to the pagan populations; in relation to university life, the nation denoted the various associations of students which were based on their common vernacular languages, etc.

253 See Chapter 3, Part 1.3 of the present work.

quite feeble.[254] British historian Norman Davies, who has produced the most insightful singular history of Poland to date, writes:

> "In the old Republic [of Poland-Lithuania], prior to 1795, Polish nationality could indeed be defined in terms of loyalty to the state. The 'Polish Nation' was usually reserved as an appellation for those inhabitants who enjoyed full civil and political rights, and thus for the nobility alone."[255]

We will see in the first part of the third chapter how this applies to Britain and France before presenting elements of the construction of the content of the nationalist formation of nations in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. The political nation of the preceding period, as is suggested by Davies, did not apply to the late modern conceptualisation of political legitimacy vested in the people. The English term of *people*, the French term of *peuple* and the Polish terms of *lud*, and their variants, were used (and still are at times) in distinction to the citizens proper, i.e. the upper orders of society from the lower orders. The notion of people did not win its spurs, or as the French expression goes, did not "acquire its nobility" (*acquérir ses lettres de noblesse*) as a power legitimating symbol before the late eighteenth century. Without this essential signification which tilted the political cosmology of the early modern period in favour of the modern republican *cosmos* (as opposed to the monarchic or dynastic), nationalism, considered as the imaginary function of making peoples congruent with states, could not have borne the social-historical signification it has acquired since the end of the eighteenth century.

254 Calhoun, *Nationalism*, pp. 4-5.

255 Norman Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland. Volume II: 1795 to the Present*, [Revised Edition], Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p. 9.

– Chapter 3 –
Strands in the History of National Imaginaries

"As a woman, I have no country."[256]

256 Virginia Woolf, *Three Guineas.*

– Part 1 –
Disjunctions: Premises of National Plots

1. Empire of Many Nations

The early significations which in time set the grid for the components of nationalism in Britain, or "Britishness", can be traced back to the early modern period. All those significations had evolved in interdependence and came into formation in relation to historical conditions – a conjuncture – particular to the geopolitical area we now call the British Isles. The most obvious of these conditions is their relative isolation from mainland Europe. Concerning what would become Great Britain, three strands of significations stand out: the monarchy, in its enlightened and absolute forms, the reformation and the empire. These three strands rely on each other and one often helps in making the others' significations explicit. The reformation in the Kingdom of England[257] was a process which originated under the rule of king Henry VIII, who was instituted supreme head of the newly formed Church of England, effectively – but not entirely dogmatically – separating it from the Holy Roman Catholic Church by a series of Parliamentary acts in the 1530s.[258] The Protestant reformation which was gaining momentum in mainland Europe influenced the English reformation, but it was not until Elizabeth I's accession to the throne that protestant dogmas became

257 Wales has been annexed to the crown of England since the Statutes of Wales in 1284. But it is through the Laws in Wales Acts of 1535 and 1542 that Wales became legally a integral part of the Kingdom of England. In 1736, after the Act of Union with Scotland (1707), the Parliament of the newly formed Great Britain passed the Wales and Berwick Act which made explicit the implicit reference to Wales in the denomination "England". From the entry "Wales" in the *Encyclopædia Britannica Ultimate Reference Suite*, Chicago, Encyclopædia Britannica, 2010.

258 Colin Pendrill, *The English Reformation: Crown Power and Religious Change 1485-1558*, Oxford, Heinemann Educational Publishers, 2000, pp. 88-94. For a social history of the English reformation, see Norman Jones, *The English Reformation: Religious and Cultural Adaptation*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2002.

dominant. The most noteworthy strand that needs to be picked up here is related to the cosmological change which the reformation induced.[259]

The theological principle of the *sola scriptura* ("by scripture alone") was the ultimate principle in protestant theology vindicated in the Reformation. It is a formal principle[260] which establishes the Bible as the only source of legitimate authority.[261] One of the main consequences is the depreciation of the other sources of power: the clergy and tradition. The *cosmos* which was promoted through the Reformation was radically different from the then traditional order which established the Holy See as a central authority in medieval Europe.[262] In consequence, papal power and its signification diminished in pace with the spread of the Reformation throughout Europe. The new order was finally settled in 1648 with the signing of the Peace of Westphalia treaties, which put an end to the religious violence and wars which had torn Europe during the many preceding decades. The relevant detail in regards to the Peace of Westphalia is that it established the recognition of state sovereignty residing based on a new definition of sovereignty. The recognition of the absolute sovereignty of states, *de facto* and *de jure*, effectively disintegrated the significance

259 See Roman Szporluk, *Communism and Nationalism, Karl Marx versus Friedrich List*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1988, p. 86. There were other radical innuendos of imaginary change in the catholic space, notably in the cosmopolitanism and humanism of theologians and scholars such as Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592), Desiderius Erasmus Roterodamus (1466-1536) and Thomas More (1478-1535), which were the first "beams" of the Enlightenment period and constitute the beginning of what is called the "Republic of Letters".

260 The second general category in Christian theology being tradition, or "material principles".

261 Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction*, Oxford, Blackwell, 2007, p. 59.

262 In continuity of the already authoritative symbol of the city of Rome. The conversion of Frankish king Clovis in the fifth century A.D. effectively established the medieval power association between Rome and European states carried out through the clergy which answered both to their respective monarchs and to the Pope. This association was further expressed in the papal recognitions of kingship which can be assimilated to the symbolic act of incarnation, establishing the "divine right" of the kings. The first such explicit recognition took place on behalf of Frankish king Pippin in 757. At the same time, the king also decreed the first legal settlement of the question of the temporal power of the Papacy. See Magne Sæbø [ed.], *Hebrew Bible/Old Testament: The History of its Interpretation, 1. The Middle Ages*, Göttingen, Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 2000, p. 44.

of the papal power of recognition of kingship in favour of power of the kings and princes of Europe.[263]

But this was no sudden change. This power had already been severely hampered in the century which separated the early stages of the Reformation and the Peace of Westphalia. The well established divine right of kings was one of the elements which would justify the instituting of King Henry VIII as supreme head of the Church of England. This signified that the king was recognised as being invested with kingly power directly by God.[264] By the time the Peace of Westphalia was signed, this signification had informed all the European heads of state.[265]

The first consequence was the emergence of absolute monarchies, in protestant and catholic states alike, which signifies that the future legal definition of state sovereignty was being integrated in both imaginaries in conflating the state with the monarch.[266] In the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, this notion of state sovereignty would be redefined in favour of the liberal ideology, whose cosmology focuses more radically and collectively on individuals.[267] The associated notion of *people* would be informed by the modern notion of state sovereignty, opening the breach for yet another potential signification in the late modern imaginary: the association of modern states with a new discourse of legitimacy based on, at first, a relatively abstract notion of people. It primarily made sense as a challenging signification to the divine order. It would subsequently become the finest pattern of nationalism, and its weaving would indeed be embodied in the identifying of

263 See Benjamin Straumann, "The Peace of Westphalia (1648) as a Secular Constitution", *Constellations*, Vol. 15, No. 2, 2008, pp. 173-188; Keith Suter, "Globalization and the New World Order", *Contemporary Review*, 2006, pp.420−429, <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m2242/is_1683_288/ai_n18791396/?tag=content;col1> [Last accessed 21.03.2010].

264 This was also supported by the notions of kinship and blood which had been of particular significance to the nobles of Europe since long before.

265 Arnaud Blin, *1648, La Paix de Westphalie: ou la naissance de l'Europe politique moderne*, Paris, Editions Complexe, 2006, p. 56.

266 The most prominent example being of such absolute monarchs being Louis XIV of France (1643-1715), although most enlightened monarchs already bore the seed of absolutism as the Tudor dynasty in England already illustrates.

267 Liberalism, even if somewhat related to democratic ideas, is fundamentally aristocratic. Aristocracy literally meaning "rule of the best". It is the signification of "best" that differentiates the liberal aristocracy from the early modern nobiliary aristocracy based on birth privileges and not on merit.

particular peoples with particular states by filling the imaginary gaps between the two.

The founding significations of particular nations vary in accordance with the geopolitical and historical conditions. In the case of Britain, the monarchy and the colonial enterprise would successively provide elemental threads for what would become the pattern of Britishness in the nineteenth century. The first such significant thread resulted from the inheritance conjuncture between the royal houses of England and Scotland leading to the first unification of the crowns in 1603 when James VI Stuart, king of Scots became James I of England. The two kingdoms were eventually legally united in the Acts of Union of 1707 under the denomination of the Kingdom of England and Scotland.

The symbolic and legal unification of power fostered the rapprochement between the English and Scottish elites, not least in the concentration of authority in London at the expense of Edinburgh.[268] It would further bolster economic ties, and particularly after the unification in the form of the colonial ventures. But in the decades prior to the unification, Scottish merchants and ships could not access English colonial markets.[269] This was just the most direct consequence of the financial mania and the trade wars which had defined the rise of mercantile capitalism in Europe.[270] The belief that colonial markets would boost the economy and solve the kingdom's financial problems led the Scottish elite to seek their own empire. The most patent of the Scottish colonial attempts of the 1690s was the Darién scheme,[271] which resolved itself in what is often referred to and imagined as Scotland's greatest financial disaster.[272]

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268 According to Christopher A. Whatley in *The Scots and the Union*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2006, p. 5, the process had already started by the late 1680s.

269 Douglas Watt, *The Price of Scotland: From Darien to the Wealth of Nations*, Edinburgh, Luath Press, 2007, p. 20.

270 Watt, *The Price of Scotland*, p. 80.

271 Its aim was to establish of a colony in the Isthmus of Panama. Watt, *The Price of Scotland*, p. 221.

272 Failure in local trading, diseases and the violent opposition of the Spanish empire all played in disfavour of the Scottish venture. See Watt, *The Price of Scotland*, p. 248.

In a short time, the Scottish economic and political elites would thus welcome a union and the new state that granted them protection based on English power as well as full access to the imperial enterprise.[273] As famous Scottish nationalist and university professor, Andrew Dewar Gibb, already noted in 1937: "The existence of the Empire has been the most important factor in securing the relationship of Scotland and England in the last three centuries."[274]

Nevertheless, the union was unpopular among the majority of the layers of Scottish society. Their reasons were largely religious and historical,[275] but neither their significations nor the different sectors of the society were associated enough to denote a form of nationalism. The formation of a Scottish national imaginary only started to emerge in the late nineteenth century – as in most other cases in Europe –, expressed in the conversion of legitimating of power from divine right and kinship to the liberal and nationalist significations of people and self-determination.[276] This change is best represented by the growing promotion in the late nineteenth century of "home rule" by the Scottish elites, forming into as a political movement for an autonomous Scottish assembly within the British state.[277]

Effectively, the colonial enterprise had sustained an imaginary woven primarily with class and mercantile interests rather than the enlarged kinship of the nationalist signification of nation. The empire would continue to play a central role in the

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273 David Powell, *Nationhood and Identity: The British State since 1800*, London, I.B. Tauris, 2002, p.16. This shift to a relocalised nationalism would eventually be increasingly informed by the collapse of the empire throughout the twentieth century

274 Andrew Dewar Gibb, *Scottish Empire*, London, A. Maclehose & Co, 1937, p. 311. Further on the retreat of British Empire and the concurrent rise of Scottish nationalism see T.M. Devine, "The Break-Up of Britain? Scotland and the Empire", *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, Vol. 16, 2006, pp. 163–180.

275 Finlay, Richard J., "Keeping the Covenant: Scottish National Identity", T.M. Devine and J.R. Young [eds.], *Eighteenth Century Scotland: New Perspectives*, East Linton, Tuckwell Press, 1999, pp.122-144. See also Jeffrey Stephen, *Scottish Presbyterians and the Act of Union 1707*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2007.

276 The development of industry in Scotland in the nineteenth century had certainly favoured this movement. The economic argument is still today central to the Scottish nationalist discourse. See the Scottish National Party's "Manifesto 2007", *BBC News*, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/shared/bsp/hi/pdfs/12_04_07_snpmanifesto.pdf> [retrieved 03.05.2010], p. 7.

277 Jack Brand, *The National Movement in Scotland*, London, Routledge and Kegan, 1978, p. 171.

British nationalist imaginary but would not only to serve the interests of the elites, but that of *the nation*.

2. Republican Risings

The evolution from the early eighteenth to late nineteenth century dominant ideology among the Scottish upper classes suggests that at a certain point, the legitimacy of the Act of Union and the interests that prompted them into the joint-venture of the British state started to be undermined by a competing thread of significations.

A certain number of events which took place in the seventeenth century had informed such a thread. The major element is to be found in the rise of republican ideas which originated in the Renaissance and whose doctrine was based on the rejection of monarchy as the best form of government.[278] In the seventeenth century, republican ideas had spread to the whole of Europe. This is not the place to make full sense of what republicanism was, particularly in view of scholarly opinions which suggest that a simple synthesis of what republicanism meant in the early modern period may prove impossible.[279] A working definition is nevertheless in order. In modern political theory, republicanism is often considered to hold the middle ground between liberalism and communitarianism. Republicanism in the early modern period can be considerer to be primarily based on the opposition to the rule of monarchy – taking different forms in accordance with the various interpretation of "liberty" with which republicans were juggling, ranging from liberal interpretations (e.g. individualist and equal liberty) to communitarian ones (e.g. political equality).[280] Before modern ideologies started to appear in more

278 Martin van Gelderen and Quentin Skinner [eds.], *Republicanism: A Shared European Heritage. Volume 1: Republicanism and Consitutionalism in Early Modern Europe*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2002, pp.1-2.

279 Dario Castiglione, "Republicanism and its Legacy", *European Journal of Political Theory*, Vol. 4, No. 4, London, Sage, 2005, pp. 453-465, p. 460.

280 See Castioglione, "Republicanism and its Legacy", p. 462. Montesquieu himself described the different types of governments which were distinct from monarchy as republican, suggesting such a loose signification of republicanism. See Marcel Prélot and Georges Lescuyer, *Histoire des idées politiques*, [13th ed.], Paris, Dalloz, 1997, pp. 329-332.

synthetic forms in the late eighteenth century, republicanism could be considered to be one of the epistemological bases of the early modern radical imaginary.

In England, two significant series of events were prodded by such republican ideas: the two English revolutions. Significantly, the first series of events, the English Civil Wars (1642-1646 and 1649-1651) and the period of the Commonwealth of England (1649-1660) were dominantly influenced by communitarian trends of republicanism in contrast to the Glorious Revolution of 1688.[281] This second revolution established a constitutional monarchy. The Kingdom of England rose as a more commercial and religiously tolerant state. The successes of the liberal trends of republicanism were also the first steps in the synthesis of a pattern of liberalism. The rapprochement between the English and Scottish elites which lead to the reunion of their interests was significantly informed by their respective liberal grids of significations.

In the Kingdom of France, republican ideas would remain marginal for another century. Notwithstanding the obvious different geopolitical conditions, most of the early imaginary conditions which held it at bay were dominated and instituted by the religious wars which were more frequent and violent than in England. When they were eventually settled in 1598 by the Edict of Nantes which established a form of religious tolerance, other kinds of revolt followed in reaction to the liberal economic measures which established the state's fiscal policy in favour of towns and their markets over the rest.[282]

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281 The first series of events were termed “English Revolution” in the mid twentieth century by Marxist historians, see e.g. Christopher Hill, *The English Revolution 1640,* Lawrence and Wishart, London, 1940, <http://www.marxists.org/archive/hill-christopher/english-revolution/index.htm> [accessed 19.07.2010]. For a sociological study on the revolution of 1688, see Edward Vallance, *The Glorious Revolution: 1688 - Britain's Fight for Liberty*, Little, Brown & Co., 2006.

282 These popular rural revolts are called the “jacqueries des croquants” and occurred long into the nineteenth century. They are considered reactionary as most of them did not question the social order but demanded the abolishing of fiscal law or certain Bourgeois class privileges. At the same time, it would be too simple to encapsulate them under the reactionary banner, as they also were the expression of the demands for social balance. For a comprehensive history, see Yves-Marie Bercé, *Croquants et nu-pieds : les soulèvements paysans en France du XVIème au XIXème siècle*, Paris, Gallimard, 1991 [1974]. One other revolt is worth putting forward to express the extent to which the state's fiscal policy was at some point contested. The series of events referred to as “la Fronde” (1648-1653) were the reaction from of nobles against the rise of absolutism in the form of taxation.

The religious divide was often secondary. When the revolts ceased for a longer period of time in the late sixteenth century, a Catholic counter reform was under way from the 1660s onwards, under the reign of Louis XIV (1643-1715).[283] In 1685, the Edict of Nantes was revoked and persecutions called the "dragonnades" against the Huguenots, the French Protestants, followed and were carried out even after the king's death. The long reign of Louis XV which followed (1715-1774) was more consensual from the start, first under a cautious regency until 1723, and then under the somewhat timorous and generally flexible rule of the new king.[284] In conjunction with the gradually growing unpopularity of the king, the republican imaginary quickly started gaining space and momentum. Emergences of republicanism had taken place throughout Europe and the ranks of the "Republic of Letters" were growing, particularly in relation to the kingdom of France.[285]

When the radical significations of those philosophies had spread enough, the revolutionary period which ensued saw the conflation of a variety of trends of republicanism, all the more structured than during the English revolutions.[286] The physical and political violence of the revolution were expressions of this conflation, as well as the flourishing of a vast array of radical and often conflicting political doctrines which would inform all late modern ideologies.[287] These radical uprisings had been canalised in a short period of time now called the French Revolution, but more importantly it points to two parameters of the conjuncture of the momentum:

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283 Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, *The Ancien Régime: A History of France, 1610-1774*, Mark Greengrass [trans.], Oxford, Blackwell, 1996 [1991], pp. 184-185.

284 Roy Ladurie, *The Ancient Régime*, p. 280.

285 Some of the most recognised philosophers of the period are Montesquieu (1689-1755), Voltaire (1694-1778), Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778), and Denis Diderot (1713-1784). For an inquiry into the far reaches of the enlightened age, see Michel Onfray, *Les Ultras des Lumières: Contre-histoire de la philosphie, tome 4*, Paris, Grasset & Fasquelle, 2007.

286 It is considered that the revolutionary period in France exceeded the traditional series of events coined under the name of the French revolution, from the elite reactionary policies in the 1780s to the coup instituting the Consulate in 1799 establishing a lasting authoritarian rule. See René Rémond, *Introduction à l'histoire de notre temps: tome 1: l'Ancien Régime et la Révolution*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 2002 [1974]. French historian Max Gallo, who can be considered a French nationalist historian, points to economic problems and the ensuing fiscal policy since 1774 as the origins of the Revolution. See Max Gallo, *La Revolution Française. Tome 1 : le peuple et le Roi*, Paris, XO Editions, 2009.

287 For a historical analysis of the transhistorical significations of the French revolution: François Furet, *Penser la Révolution française*, Paris, Gallimard, 1978.

the various ideologies had expanded in social signification more or less simultaneously and were pointing, among other significations, to a same paradigmatic change. The French Revolution can be considered a success beyond French history as it would become a *transcultural* signification. Its *becoming* the French Revolution was significantly constructed throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries through social-historical moments across the globe by legitimating or contesting its political symbolism.[288] In this sense – and accounting for its ongoing thread – the French Revolution can be considered the social-historical moment which tilted the balance of power in favour of modern radical significations. The Revolution was itself the result of the skeins of radical social institutions which had consistently been contesting, across borders of all kinds, the instituted imaginary of divine order, royalty and nobility.[289]

From a perspective in the contemporary socio-historical moment, the French Revolution, imagined as a founding event, can appear as a fixed star in the modern imaginary cosmology, shining in accordance to one's ideological perspective. But this is a representation, i.e. an optical illusion, which can now be perceived as the expression of the becoming hegemonic of late modern significations. From the historical point of view of the imaginary, or socio-historically, the events of the French Revolution have a signification that transcends the events, and consequently, it is but a part of the drag on the movements of constellations.

From this perspective, the French Revolution is only a relative success, not only because it comprises the different symbolical recognitions of the French Revolution, but because of certain parts of its imaginary and their transcultural significations. The associations they socially and historically include have proven they can be at least as authoritarian as tyranny and extensively more violent than the Inquisition.

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288 The importance of the French Revolution for Marx, and the subsequent Marxist schools of thought is obvious. The contestation was much less prominent in the twentieth century but was dominantly a royalist reaction in Europe during the nineteenth century.

289 On the relation between the continuities and discontinuities of the French Revolution see Furet, *Penser la Révolution française*, pp. 127-130.

One of the core significations which had crystallised in the late eighteenth century was the signification of "people" as the symbol of the contestation of the instituted cosmology of power. In short, it was the "right of the people" versus the "law of God". In practice, it meant contention on various occasions and on various levels of the power of the *Anciens Régimes* across Europe.

3. Nation of Many Estates

The Pyramids of Injustice

A major point around which the contestation of the instituted cosmology of power was articulated was the incarnation of what legitimised power (and more particularly, political power). We already comprehend some of the shifting significations from what represented power in the old systems of government in Europe to what legitimised the rising republican or mixed forms of government. As the representation of "God" had consistently been relegated to the level of personal conscience, the imaginary space thus left vacant in the legitimation of political power could be invested with the representation of "the people".[290] The expression of nationalism followed the same course.[291] In the historical moment of the French Revolution, the pamphlet *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?* by Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès stands out as a decisive twist.[292] The twist which this text signifies is the tie between "one people" and "one state" which is the constitution of the fundamental association in ideological nationalism. In order to decrypt the sense of the twist, we first need to get a sense of the localised imaginary significance of the pamphlet.

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290 One of the most recognised formulations of the representation of "the people" as legitimising power, is found in the American constitutions of 1776 in which "We the People" was addressed to the government of the British Empire and not to the peoples of the colonies, signifying the loss of legitimacy of the Empire over its then former colonies. In this respect, the success of the institution of the American constitution also confirmed the success of the liberal English revolution in the form of a mixed government as the radical republicans had left Britain for the colonies.

291 For a presentation of the premises of nationalism in philosophical and political thinking, see Szporluk, Communism *and Nationalism*, pp. 79-95.

292 The title translates into "What is the Third estate?" and was first published in 1789 and inspired political theory throughout the nineteenth century. Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?*, e-book, Editions du Boucher, 2002, <http://www.leboucher.com/pdf/sieyes/tiers.pdf> [accessed 17.01.2010].

In early 1789, Sieyès, who was a bourgeois church representative, wrote a series of pamphlets which gave him a certain notoriety. *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?* is certainly the one which brought the most attention to Sieyès before the revolution and up until today. Along with many other agitators,[293] Sieyès was pleading in favour of an assembly of the General Estates (*les Etats Généraux*) which had been promised by the king, who was the only one who could summon such an assembly.[294] The assembly was eventually summoned on the 6th of July and through a series of upheavals became the first French Constituting National Assembly (*Assemblée nationale constituante*).[295] Sieyès who had ealier been elected a representative of the Third estate, played a major role in this transformation, putting into practice what he had laid out in his pamphlet. His plan was the constitution of the three estates in one, which called for the institution of one estate order under a common law. The formation of the National assembly led to the abolishing of the feudal system just a month after.[296] Starting from there, Pierre-Henry Travaillot, a French historian of Liberal philosophy, considers the pamphlet as instituting the "rhetoric of the Revolution".[297]

Formally, the text appears as a typical pamphlet in its length (about 30,000 words) and in its presentation. The title, in form and content, makes us wonder to whom it is

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293 In the wake of the revolution, political pamphlets and brochures had become the most popular form for expressing and promoting political opinions. The trend would be confirmed in the following century. A recent critical publication of some of the pamphlets from the period suggests the range of the topics and opinions which were subjects of debates. "Les Enfants de Sodome à l'Assemblée Nationale [1790]", *Les Cahiers QuestionDeGenre no. 57*, Pierre Cardon [ed.], Lille, GayKitschCamp, 2005, presents how gender relations were also debated along the lines of what we would today call gays and lesbians against heterosexuals.

294 They were the expectational assemblies Kings of France summoned beginning in 1302, usually to solve a political crisis.

295 The official website of the contemporary National Assembly of the French Republic offers a more detailed history of its formation: <http://www.assemblee-nationale.fr/histoire/histoire-1789.asp> [last accessed 14.11.2010]

296 Sieyès remained very active in the following drafting of the *Declaration des droits de l'homme et du citoyen* and the early French constitutions. He would lay low under the regime of Terror (1793-94) to eventually participate in closing up the period of instability he had partly instigated in 1789 by supporting Napoléon Bonaparte in 1799. See Pierre-Henry Travaillot, "Les querelles philosophiques de le Révolution française", lecture, *les Rencontres de Cannes*, Arte-Philosphia, 2005. <http://www.dailymotion.com/video/xfxvef_les-querelles-philosophiques-de-la-revolution-francaise_webcam> [last accessed 11.11.2010]

297 Travaillot, "Les querelles philosophiques de le Révolution française".

addressed. Another pamphlet which had been published shortly before plainly addressed "the people of the provinces" to convince them to recognise the Third estate and act in its favour.[298] This in turn suggests that Sieyès's text is taking up and elaborating the general opinions of the bourgeoisie and addresses his pamphlet to the estates, i.e. the representatives of the orders.

The short, lapidary, introduction not only serves as a rationale, but stands also between a rhetorical demonstration and the table of contents. The first three chapters are announced with a subsidiary question followed by a synthetic and hypothetical answer. It announces that the core of the text will be the demonstration of the validity of the claims:

> "1. Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état? Tout.
> 2. Qu'a-t-il été jusqu'à présent dans l'ordre politique? Rien.
> 3. Que demande-t-il? A être quelque chose."[299]

The three other chapters form a second part where Sieyès presents the political means for the recognition of those claims. Chapters four and five focus on the unsuccessful or insufficient propositions made by the state and members of the other estates – the nobility and the clergy. Finally, the conclusive chapter clearly expresses the institutional demands which run throughout the text and are formally made in the name of the Third estate. These demands are centred around the question of the voting system which was then based on the orders.[300] Sieyès defends a voting

298 This shows how the definition of the Third estate was indeed a major issue, if not the main one, for the proponents of a republican order. The text of Sieyès appears as the elaboration of elements which Jean-Paul Rabat (also known as Rabat Saint-Etienne) a protestant priest whose notoriety was close to that of Sieyès's, in his pamphlet*Considerations très-importantes sur les intérêts du tiers-état, adressées au peuple des provinces, par l'auteur de l'Avis important sur le ministere & sur l'Assemblée prochaine des États-généraux,* 1788, e-book [original scan], <http://books.google.fr/ebooks?id=RfehAAAAMAAJ&printsec=frontcover&output=reader> [accessed 7.09.2010]. Two sections of the pamphlet (6 and 7) are devoted to "What the Third estate is" (*Ce que c'est que le Tiers état*), where the arguments are very similar to the ones Sieyès further elaborates.

299 "What is the Third Estate? Everything./2. What has it been in the political order? Nothing./ 3. What is it asking for? To become something in this order." Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?*, p. 1. For a copy of the entire first page and a translation, see annexe 6.

300 Effectively, it meant that each order, as one body, had one vote. The core of Sieyès's argument is that the nobility and the clergy would join their vote against the Third estate while representing less than 5% of the population of the kingdom.

system per head instead of per order. The first three chapters stand as the frame in which such a claim is justified.

We have seen the form of the success of these demands in the establishment of a National assembly and some of the political developments which followed. In effect, the pamphlet appears as the performative trigger of what will constitute – *co-institute* – the Revolution. To follow up on this metaphor, the text, considered as a sign, can be read as the preamble for the constitution of an imaginary framework, which will turn out to be the fundamental expression of nationalism.

Looking at the number of occurrences of the term "nation" in more detail (without its derivatives), the term is employed close to 180 times, which is more or less the same count for "Tiers état" (or simply "Tiers"). This does only signify their comparable formal importance. What is more interesting is the way they are distributed in the text and the relation between them and a number of other terms, notably the legitimating term of "peuple" (which is employed less than half as frequently as each of the preceding terms). While "Tiers état" is used more or less consistently throughout the text, the term "nation" is comparatively clearly dominant in the last three chapters. But focusing on these chapters could prove misleading in the perspective of elucidating the signification of nationalism the text expresses. The relation between the different terms of "Tiers état", "nation" and "peuple", among others, is laid out in the first three chapters. This cosmology prescribes their use in the remainder of the text. In the first chapter, Sieyès defines "nation" on a legal and liberal basis:

> "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation? Un corps d'associés vivant sous une loi *commune* et représentés par la même *legislature*, etc."[301]

301 "What is a nation? A body of associates living under a *common* law and represented by the same *legislature*, etc." Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?*, p. 5. A comparison with the terms used in contemporary dictionaries in the definitions of "nation", the idea of common law is secondary, just like the idea of common language. The *Dictionnaire de l'Académie française*, 1762 and the *Dictionaire critique de la langue française*, 1787-88 define "nation" primarily as "the inhabitants of one state". The ARTFL Project, "Dictionaires d'autrefois", University of Chicago, <http://artflx.uchicago.edu/cgi-bin/dicos/pubdico1look.pl?strippedhw=nation> [accessed 02.09.2010]

Based on the idea of a common law, the first chapter consistently presents how the nobility, given its privileges, constitutes in Sieyès's eyes, a different "people" within the "greater nation".[302] In legal terms, Sieyès presents the law (or reality) as it is (*de lege lata),* establishing how the privileges of the noble orders prevent the nation from being united under one common law (*de lege ferenda,* how the law should be applied). He concludes the first chapter with a classic legal syllogism:

> "Le Tiers embrasse donc tout ce qui appartient à la nation; et tout ce qui n'est pas le Tiers ne peut se regarder comme étant de la nation. Qu'est-ce que le Tiers? Tout."[303]

Conversely, "everything" means "the nation", here defined as a body of legally equal citizens, which can be put in relation to the so called political or civic definition of the nation.[304]

The liberal take in redefining the nation from a vague community to a community bound by a contract of mutual recognition of civil rights is not a French particularity. The same year as Sieyès's pamphlet was published, Richard Price, a British clergyman, delivered a speech in commemoration of "the Revolution in Great Britain", where "the country" is defined in nearly the exact same way as "the nation" by Sieyès:

> "by our country is meant, in this case, not the soil or the spot of earth on which we happen to have been born; not the forests and fields, but that community of which we are members; or that *body of companions and friends and kindred who are associated with us under the same constitution of government,*

302 "un peuple à part dans la grande nation." Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?,* p. 5. Sieyès also uses the term "cast" to describe the noble order (p. 4) and suggests it is a "class of outsiders" ("une classe […] étrangère à la nation", p. 5).

303 "The Third estate embraces everything which belongs to the nation; and everything which is not part of the Third estate cannot consider itself as a part of the nation. What is the Third estate? Everything." Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?,* p. 5.

304 Sieyès writes later that in his mind, the "Tiers" is always confounded with the nation, Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?,* p. 10. On civic nationalism see Chapter 1, Part 1.2 of the present work.

> *protected by the same laws, and bound together by the same civil polity*." [emphasis added][305]

From an ideological point of view, the relation between these echoing definitions of nation and country are tokens of the cosmopolitanism of the liberal elites. On the level of the imaginary, this account is only partial. It presents us with the transcultural *modus operandi* of significations of power.[306]

The Œcumene of Barbarians

In the second chapter of *Qu'est-ce le Tiers état?*, Sieyès refines his prosecution. Having established how civil and political rights distinguish the nobles from the Tiers and consequently of the nation defined in terms of common equal rights, he pursues in establishing how the injustice towards the Tiers had been justified. This is a critical point for our study of nationalism. The first chapter set out to define the nation in political terms. The second chapter will disintegrate the power legitimating narrative of the nobility, seemingly leaving this space vacant. We will see how this rhetoric in fact presents us with the finest expression of nationalism as a social signification.

To describe the elements which legitimised the traditional order, Sieyès refers to a counter discourse which appears to have been widely shared among the bourgeois revolutionaries. Jean-Paul Rabat, the often quoted pamphleteer, was an elected representative of the Third estate in the first years of the Revolution. His most famous quote is "our history is not our code" (*notre histoire n'est pas notre code*). Speaking about how the antiquity of a law does not grant it justice, he writes:

> "On s'appuie sur l'histoire ; mais l'histoire n'est pas notre code. Nous devons nous défier de la manie de prouver ce qui doit se faire, par ce qui s'est fait ; car c'est précisément de ce qui s'est fait que nous nous plaignons. Cette histoire

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305 Richard Price, *A Discourse on the Love of Our Country, delivered on Nov. 4, 1789, at the Meeting-House in the Old Jewry, to the Society for Commemorating the Revolution in Britain. With an Appendix*, [2nd edition], London, T. Cadell, 1789. E-Book, *The Online library of Liberty*, <http://oll.libertyfund.org/?option=com_staticxt&staticfile=show.php%3Ftitle=368&chapter=95623&layout=html&Itemid=27> [accessed 14.11.2010]

306 Presently of such republican significations. The expression "republican significations" may seem problematic, but in the imaginary framework we have laid out it is the least problematic way of comprehending the variants of nationalism usually termed civic and liberal.

même, que nous nous gardons bien d'alléguer comme une loi, et que nous n'employons que contre ceux qui la citent, l'histoire témoignerait contre eux ; car en prouvant qu'on a changé jadis, elle les forcerait à conclure qu'on peut changé aujourd'hui."[307]

Sieyès does indeed employ this "history" against the nobility. The point he decides to unravel is what he calls the "rights of conquest" (*droits de conquête*),[308] which grant to the noble orders (and more precisely the higher rungs in these orders) their position of power, their *aristocracy*. As Sieyès explains, these rights date back to the conquest of Gaul by Germanic tribes, notably the Francs.[309] The original nobility has either disappeared or joined in with the Frankish nobility. As a consequence, the "true" nobility of the nation is working against it. Secondly, a new nobility has emerged from the Third estate, which although equal in rights, is not considered as equal by the "ancient nobility". Sieyès suggests that these "true" and "new" nobles "return" to the nation, just as much as "the race of the conquerors" whose blood is not so blue anymore. He then shows how these rights, based on their antiquity, are beyond obsolete: they are absurd. In a sophisticated series a syllogisms, he demonstrates how the legitimacy of history/ancestry would benefit the Third estate, i.e. "the people", "the nation". It would be enough to go back to the "the year preceding the conquest"[310] to see that the ancestr*ies* of the people are at least worth as much as that of the long gone conquerors:[311] The twist which gives this rhetoric a sense of dominance is the comprehension (or inclusion), historically and ontologically, of the claims of the nobles. The grid of the frame remains the same, but it is widened:

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307 The spelling has been modernised. "We draw on history; but our history is not our code. As our complaint is precisely about what has been done, we must defy the habit of proving what needs to be done by what has been done. This history, which we are careful not to invoke as a law, and which we will only use against those that invoke it thus, this history would bear witness against them. By proving that one has changed in the past, it would force them to conclude that one can change today", Rabat, *Considerations très-importantes sur les intérêts du tiers-état,* p.9.

308 Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?,* p. 8.

309 Sieyès himself does not provide any dates. The Frankish conquest is considered to have taken place between the fifth and ninth centuries A.D..

310 "l'année qui a précédé la conquête", Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?,* p. 8

311 Rabat professes that the original Frankish nobles were depleted after the crusades and that in consequence, new nobles were "created". Rabat, *Considerations très-importantes sur les intérêts du tiers-état,* p. 19.

> "Pourquoi ne renverrait-il pas dans les forêts de la Franconie toutes ces familles qui conservent la folle prétention d'être issues de la race des conquérants et d'avoir succédé à des droits de conquête ? La nation, alors épurée, pourra se consoler, je pense, d'être réduite à ne se plus croire composée que des descendants des Gaulois et des Romains. En vérité, si l'on tient à vouloir distinguer naissance et naissance, ne pourrait-on pas révéler à nos pauvres concitoyens que celle qu'on tire des Gaulois et des Romains vaut au moins autant que celle qui viendrait des Sicambres, des Welches et autres sauvages sortis des bois et des marais de l'ancienne Germanie?"[312] pp. 8-9

This is a particularly important passage as it concludes the *reductio ad absurdo* of the legitimacy claim of the nobles, opening up the space for new historical and legitimacy significations to take over. Not simply does Sieyès disintegrate the noble narrative of ancestry, he applies this function of history to the nation pointing to a sliding of significations from "savages" to the nation's Roman and Gallic descent, which are more obviously portrayed as positive claims. Nevertheless, he does not simply reject the Franks and other "savage" origins, but *relativises* their importance within the enlarged space thus opened. This posture towards the signification of history is a position of dominance in a philosophical struggle, a rhetorical device of the new paradigm whose sense is primarily the disintegration of the imaginary whose hegemony it contests. It would be wrong to assume it prevents the institutionalisation of different or new sets of ties, although the signification remains structurally the same. Behind the seemingly neutral legal discourse of a political representative, the content of what "the people" are by birth needs to be "revealed", or in the usual nationalist jargon, *awoken*. In a later chapter, as Sieyès presents how the nation is the basis of modern political structures, the lack of content of what the nation is beyond political structures calls for the nationalists *revelations* which were already in motion:

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312 "Why wouldn't we send back into the forests of Franconia all those families which hold the foolish pretension of being descendants of the race of conquerors and having succeeded to rights of conquest? The nation, thus purified, would find consolation, I think, in being brought down (reduced) to believing it is made up of descendants of Gauls and Romans. In truth, if one insists in distinguishing one origin (birth) from another, shouldn't we reveal to our poor fellow citizens that what we gain from the Gauls and the Romans is worth at least as much as what would come from the Sicambri, the *Welches* and the other savages who came out of the woods and marshes of ancient Germania?" Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?*, pp. 8-9.

> "[...] toutes les parties du gouvernement se répondent et dépendent en dernière analyse de la nation. Nous n'offrons ici qu'une idée fugitive, mais elle est excate."[313]

4. Republic of Many Nations: Avant-garde?

The application the principles of the *Ancien Régime* cosmology to the cosmology centred on "the people" may appear as the particularity of France. But both cosmologies are cosmologies of power, which suggests they follow – at least in part – similar patterns. Moreover, just as with other republican significations, this transfer of power also denotes the transcultural processes of the instituting republican imaginary.

Republican ideas had been spreading across Europe for many centuries before the turmoil triggered by the French Revolution. The variety of phenomena can be best appreciated by moving away from the traditional centres of attention, two of which have been presented in this chapter: Britain and France. In Eastern and Central Europe, republican ideas had gained ground, although the differing conjunctures led to different phenomena.

The Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth[314] established in 1569 was a political union between the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania. It echoes the many similar unions between feudal states in the late medieval to early modern period. The union between the Kingdoms of England and Scotland in 1707, but also the union between the Kingdom of France and the Duchy of Brittany in 1532 all correspond to the same power struggles. These unions follow a similar pattern of power transition which is typical of the feudal system. In all cases, the more or less wilful and usually unequal rapprochement between the ruling elites of two states were processed into political unions with one entity remaining dominant. The *comprehensive* pattern of the consolidation of monarchic or noble power is thus evidently a pattern of power relations in the late medieval and early modern European systems.

313 "All parts of government answer to each other and depend in the last instance on the nation. We offer here but a fugitive idea, but this idea is exact." Sieyès, *Qu'est-ce que le Tiers état?*, p. 53.

314 Also termed the Polish-Lithuanian Union, or the Commonwealth of the Two Nations.

One of the first elements which distinguish the Polish-Lithuanian Republic (*Rzeczpospolita*) was the success of the Roman Catholic counter-reformation.[315] Another important element is the supremacy of the noble estate in the social order, often supported by the Jewish estate, confronted with the other traditional estates but even more confronted with the monarchy. Between the sixteenth and the eighteenth century, while other monarchies were struggling for absolute power, the kings and queens of Poland were making more concessions than gains.[316] The balance of power was significantly more favourable to the nobility (*szlachta*) if compared with the Kingdom of France or even the United Kingdom.[317] This period is sometimes referred to as "The Period of Noble Supremacy" (1569-1763), in between "the Period of the Estates" (1374-1568) and "the Period of Reforms" (1764-1795) which led to the short-lived institution of the first Republic of Poland.[318] In 1771-1772, Jean-Jacques Rousseau who wrote his *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne et sur sa réformation projetée* intended for Polish reformers, provides us with a contemporary account of the social order of the Republic. Already suggesting an integrative form of the nation, he writes in a manner which is evidently echoed in Sieyès's pamphlet:

> "[...] la nation polonaise est composée de trois ordres: les nobles, qui sont tous; les bourgeois qui ne sont rien ; et les paysans qui sont moins que rien."[319]

In the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, the monarchy lost its grip in confrontation with one of the largest nobilities in Europe.[320] From the perspective of foreign

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315 Although neither Poland nor Lithuania should then be considered as "Catholic countries on the monolithic scale of Spain or Italy". Davies, *God's Playground: A History of Poland. Volume I: The Origins to 1795*, [Revised Edition], Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, p.154.

316 Davies, *God's Playground, Volume I*, p. 156.

317 The turning point certainly was the death of king Zygmunt August Jagellon (1548-1572) which left the state without heir. This gave the already powerful nobility the possibility of an open election in the process of which, it would negotiate a further extension of its power. Daniel Beauvois, *La Pologne: Histoire, société, culture*, Paris, Editions de La Martinière, 2004, p.115.

318 Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, p. 9 in reference to Stanislaw Kutrzeba, *Historia ustroju Poslki w zarysie*, [History of Polish Government in Outline], 1904.

319 "The Polish nation is made up of three ordres: the nobles, who are everything; the burghers who are nothing; and the peasants who are less than nothing." Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne et sur sa réformation projetée*, Paris, GF-Flammarion, 1990 [1782], p.184.

historical observers, the government of the Republic was sometimes negatively dubbed "anarchy",[321] but in many instances, especially in Polish historiography, the term of "noble democracy" appears to be preferred.[322] In terms of governance, the Republic operated as a form of a decentralised state.[323] While often translated as "commonwealth", republican ideas were central to the formation of the dominance of the *szlachta*. Davies consequently suggests that the Republic of Poland-Lithuania be considered as a "monarchical republic rather than a republican monarchy", which gives us a general sense of what distinguishes the mixed government of the Republic from the traditional western versions.[324]

For the study of nationalism, the period of the supremacy of the nobility presents us with features that have often been mistaken for nationalism. Indeed, even considering the "grossly retarded development" of the state, the culture of the *szlachta* appears to have "an air of striking modernity."[325] The modern political aspect which produces this impression is the centrality of the "Golden freedom" in the noble imaginary. In practice, the "Golden freedom" of the nobles was based on two institutions.[326] The first was the so-called Confederation, which was the expression of the right to resist. It was a legal procedure that appeared in the late fourteenth century, by which any group of individuals could, under oath, take arms to fight for their demands and grievances. The second institution, the *Liberum veto*,

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320 At the end of the sixteenth century, the nobility accounted for 6.6 per cent of the population of the Republic. Up until the eighteenth century, the figure would rise above 9 per cent. Spain and Hungary had large nobilities; the figure remained close to 5 per cent. In France and in England, the nobles represented 1 and 2 per cent respectively. Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, p. 166, 386. See also Andrzej Walicki, *Prace Wybrane, Tom 1: Naród, Nacjonalizm, Patriotyzm* [Selected Works, Volume 1: Nation, Nationalism, Patriotism], Cracow, Universitas, 2009, pp. 40-41.

321 A term which was considered synonymous with "chaos" or "terror" in the discourse of the Enlightenment. See Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, pp. 246-247.

322 Walicki, *Naród, Nacjonalizm, Patriotyzm*, p. 17, 41.

323 For a detailed diagram of the political system of the Republic, see Davies, *God's Playground, Volume I*, pp. 248-249.

324 Polish historian of philosophy Andrzej Walicki uses the same terminology, in *Naród, Nacjonalizm, Patriotyzm*, pp. 44-45. Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, p. 281.

325 Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, pp. 282-283.

326 All the political assemblies of the Republic were governed by the principle of unanimity which was taken very seriously and applied conscientiously. It was "responsible for the two constitutional practices" mentioned here. Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, p. 259.

was the prerogative of the members of political assemblies. Any member who invoked it, expressing his right to dissent, would thus halt the proceedings of the parliament until a unanimous consensus could be negotiated.[327] These institutions were generally, if not exclusively, the rights of the nobles. They were central in the establishment of their political supremacy. What gives these institutions their air of modernity is the echo their significations have in late modern liberal and democratic struggles, as the views they carried all share a "common concern to combat the power of the state."[328] But other aspects of the culture of the nobles are often seen in a negative light, partly with humour, at other times with harsh criticism:

> "Ni la puissance du roi, ni les conseils de sagesse ne pouvaient vaincre l'anarchie et le téméraire entêtement des magnats de la couronne qui, par leur légèreté, leur manque absolu de prévoyance, leur amour-propre puéril et leur vanité futile avaient fait de la Diète une caricature de gouvernement"[329]

Yet, the social order of the Republic flourished in the first centuries before declining in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The cultural ideology which accompanied the noble supremacy was based on a narrative of historical ancestry, in the same vein as those of the noble estates of the British Isles and of France, although their origins were indeed less evident. The geopolitical areas of northern central Europe were areas of passage rather than of conquest in periods of migration and invasion, prompted by the lack of natural boundaries.[330] This situation resulted in a less obviously "sectioned" or "layered" history, at least concerning the nobility. There were no clear accounts of conquest or fixed boundaries, however fictional these usually were. Polish and Lithuanian nobles could not easily trace their origins to a "right of conquest" such as that of the Franks or the Normans, nor distinguish

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327 Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, pp. 259-260, 264 and 279-280.

328 Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, p. 283.

329 "Neither the power of the king, nor the counsels of wisdom could vanquish the anarchy and the reckless stubbornness of the magnates of the crown, who, due to their levity, their absolute lack of foresight, their puerile self-esteem and their vanity had turned the Diet into a caricatural government." Nicolas Gogol, *Taras Boulba*, Paris, Flammarion, 2003, pp.205-206, quoted in Guy Amsellem, *L'imaginaire polonais: Société, culture, art, littérature*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2006, p. 41,

330 For an original and comprehensive account of the history and heritage of the barbarian invasions for the European civilisation, see Karol Modzelewski, *Barbarzyńska Europa* [Barbarian Europe], Warsaw, Iskry, 2004. For a further account on contemporary criticisms by foreign observers see Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, pp. 279-281.

themselves from a particular host of conquerors, as was the case with the Celtic areas on the western margins of Europe. These mythologies which legitimated the power of the "races of conquerors" or their opponents, instituting the imaginary of the medieval social orders, had to be constructed on frail grounds. When the late formed *szlachta* consolidated its political position in the Republic, its own mythology started to appear.[331]

The cultural ideology of the nobles, called "Sarmatism" (*Sarmatyzm*), is the historical attempt to clarify the obscure genealogy of the *szlachta*. The aim of this doctrine was twofold: to establish the nobles on a par with their neighbouring counterparts and to distinguish themselves from the remainder of the population, particularly from the peasantry. The prevailing ideology of the kingdom of Poland affiliated its origins to those of the Czechs and Russians. These ancestors were not deemed proud enough and the nobles turned to the Sarmatians, a barbarian tribe closely related to the Scythes, who were said to have conquered the plains around the Vistula and enslaved the local peoples, legitimating thus their position as a "race of lords."[332] The result was a curious mixture of East and West, between medieval ideals of chivalry and early modern republican ideals, in a décor mid-way between Baroque and Ottoman styles.[333]

The Sarmatist class or cast culture does indeed connect to the late modern (i.e. nationalist) definition of "nation" in a number of ways, but it differs on two significant points: the nationalist doctrine of the late modern period aimed at the

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331 This mythology was also embedded in the general view held by the Polish nobles on the role of Poland in the European order. As Janusz Tazbir writes, it was based on three "dogmas": Poland as the "breadbasket" (*spichrz*) of Europe, as the bulwark of Christianity and the perfection of its political regime. Thiese lead to the belief that Poland was both necessary to Europe, but also under threat from the parliamentary regimes which were gaining momentum. Janusz Tazbir, "Stosunek do obcych w dobie baroky" [The relation to others in Baroque times], Z. Stefanowska [ed.] *Swojskość i cudzoziemczyzna w dziejach kutlury polskiej*, [Identity and otherness in Polish culture], Warsaw, 1973, p. 73. See also Aleksandra Niewiara, "Inni w oczach "wojowników sarmackich" – o stereotypie narodowości w XVII wieku" [Others in the eyes of "Sarmatian warriors" – on national stereotypes in the 17th c.], J. Anusiewicz, and J. Bartmińsk, [eds.], *Język a kultura*, vol. 12, "Stereotyp jako przedmiot lingwistyki. Teoria, metodologia, analizy empiryczne", Wrocław 1998, pp. 171-218

332 Amsellem, *L'imaginaire polonais*, p. 42.

333 Amsellem, *L'imaginaire polonais*, p. 42. The attire of the nobles was in particular extensively influenced by the Ottoman style. See Annex 7.

formation of a common culture across classes and estates of the preceding social orders. This tendency towards a national totality is evidently absent in historical Sarmatism. The aim of the nobles and the general ideology of the Republic of Poland-Lithuania did not aim at changing the social order. It was essentially an *Ancien Régime* in which the different estates had negotiated an original distribution of power. The founding element of the hegemonic republican imaginary and consequently of nationalism – the legitimacy claim vested in the notion of "the people" – appeared at the same time as in France or Britain. The resulting Polish nationalism would form its content in the same way as the "West" (albeit in a radically different conjuncture as we will see later in this study): by applying the principle of noble genealogy to "the people".

– Part 2 –
Conjunctions: Linear Trajectories

1. National Reverie

The collapse of the Republic of Poland-Lithuania was marked by its partitioning in 1773, 1793 and 1795. The neighbouring states, the Hapsburg and Russian Empires and the Kingdom of Prussia, slowly deprived the Republic of its territory. The third of these partitions effectively lead to the abdication of the last Polish king, Stanisław-August Poniatowski, and the disappearance of the state.

As the revolutionary fervour was flourishing in France, groups of Polish-Lithuanian gentry, in alliance with the king, were hoping to reform and restore a form of autonomous state while being confronted with the dismembering and frailty of their institutions.[334] They fed on the radical ideals which had stirred up the social order in the Kingdom of France.[335] Although their endeavours were never properly put to practice, their result, the Constitution of the Third of May (*Konstytucja Trzeciego Maja*) would become one of the most significant symbols in the national history of modern Poland.[336] Its progressive and radical signification brought it the admiration of many since, even Karl Marx's:

> "With all its shortcomings, this constitution appears against the background of Russo-Prusso-Austrian barbarity as the only work of freedom which central Europe ever produced of its own accord. Moreover, it was created by a

334 This period is referred to as the Four Years Sejm, which was initiated in late 1788 and originally invoked to approve the alliance with the Russian Empire against the Turks.

335 With the formation of the Second Republic of Poland in 1918, the 3rd of May would be adopted as the national day. Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, p. 401. The importance of Rousseau and his nearly prophetic *Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne* present us with the common genealogy of French and Polish late modern Republicanism.

336 In theory, "all the harmful practices of the old Republic – the *Liberum Veto*, the right of resistance, the Confederation, the 'free' elections – were to be abolished." Or in other words, the privileges of the dominant social order, which had blocked the political institutions of the old Republic. Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, p. 403.

> privileged class, the gentry. The history of the world knows no other example of such generosity by the gentry."[337]

This quotation also suggests the international resonance of the first written European constitution. But in spite of its transhistorical importance, this radical attempt to reform the "noble democracy" into a modern mixed government was doomed from the outset and resolved in the final dismantling of the state. In terms of state institutions, the term "Poland" would retain no actual referent until 1918. Furthermore, the term of "Pole" would change its meaning. From a political definition, referring to the citizenry of the old Republic, it switched to an ethnic definition referring to the group of people of Polish language, which were now to be distinguished from other imperial minorities. In the contemporary political definition, there was in fact no nation anymore. And yet, the idea of an independent Polish state now representing a linguistically distinguishable people took its course. The formation of the Republic of Poland in 1918 was made possible by the century long formation of a nationalist Polish high culture.

Although a Polish state, in nationalist terms, never did exist,[338] the idea of the loss of an eternal Poland and its future restoration was fed by nationalism. In the long nineteenth century, it would be the driving force of a Polish nationalist culture which, even without its political institutions, would thrive just as well as its other European equivalents.[339] Across Europe, the nineteenth century, torn between romantic and rationalist ideals is the century of the formation of national consciences, in academic and intellectual discourse as we have seen in the first chapter, but also in the arts. The political legitimacy claim of "the people" which had laid the foundations of statehood and sovereignty would thus gain a referent. By the end of the century, states and political institutions would serve the institution of

337 Karl Marx, quoted in Davies, *God's Playground,Volume I*, p. 403.

338 Certain state-like formations were assimilated to an embryonic Polish state, such as the Duchy of Warsaw established by Napoleon I as an extension of the First French Empire in 1807, before being partitioned in 1815.

339 Guy Amsellem, *L'imaginaire polonais*, is a quite thorough presentation of the density of the Polish cultural formation.

homogenised cultures within their respective spaces.[340] This process of symbolic violence is founded on the invention (and not the rediscovery) of a noble-like ancestry of peoples, which aggregates – *imagines* – states, languages and populations in a singular and linear fashion.

The political realisation that the modern legitimacy claim based on the abstract notion of people would not hold as such can be traced to the various insurrections and revolutions which have punctuated the first half of the nineteenth century. Contesting the new European order in formation, they can certainly be considered as outgrowths of and reactions to the earlier revolutionary crises.[341] The strongest of the three revolutionary waves of this period, dated around 1848, is often referred to as 'the springtime of peoples'. From the perspective of nationalist elites, it is also called the "movement of the nationalities" (*le mouvement des nationalités*).[342] The political clout of the various revolutions and insurrections in the 1840s had a clearer democratic signification, both in practice and in ideology.[343]

The various political elites, in position of power like in Britain and France or struggling to establish their independence like in the case of the Polish nationalists, was then realising the strength and importance of actual peoples. This is the primary effect for the development of the national imaginaries of the springtime of peoples. In Polish arts and historiography, this period can be summed up as "the quest for a national reconciliation", often depicted under the banners of a revival or an awakening (as is the usually the case in nationalist discourse).[344] Guy Amsellem in his study of the Polish imaginary dates the realisation of the relevance of the lower

340 In practice, it echoed the growing importance of the state, see René Rémond, *Introduction à l'histoire de notre temps – 2. Le XIXe siècle 1815-1914*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1974, pp. 104-113.

341 Between 1815 and 1848, three revolutionary waves stirred the European order, often beyond its geographical sense. The two first wave, around the 1820s, was a generally unsuccessful reaction of the republican liberal elites against the reactionary successes of monarchies in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars. The second wave of the 1830s had a similar political motivation but resolved itself in the establishment of a relative hegemony of bourgeois liberalism. Rémond, *Le XIXe siècle*, pp. 179-185; Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution*, pp. 111-112.

342 Rémond, *Le XIXe siècle*, p. 179.

343 Rémond, *Le XIXe siècle*, p. 186.

344 Amsellem, *L'imaginaire polonais*, p. 47.

orders for political restoration to the failure of the rising of 1830.[345] The following extract of the poem "Psalm to Love" (*Psalm miłości*) written in 1845 by Polish romantic poet, Zygmunt Krasiński, expresses this evolution, which resounds like a nationalist and indeed national call to arms:

> "Jeden tylko, jeden cud:
> Z Szlachtą polską – polski Lud,
> Jak dwa chóry – jedno pienie! -
> Wszystko inne – złudą złud!
> Wszystko inne – plamą plam!
> I ojczyzna tylko tam! -
> Jeden tylko, jeden cud:
> Z Szlachtą polską – polski Lud,
> Dusza żywa z żywym ciałem,
> Zespojone świętym szałem;
> Z tego ślubu jeden Duch,
> Wielki naród polski sam,
> Jedna wola, jeden ruch,
> O! zbawienie tylko – tam!"[346]

As very few institutions in the old territories of the Polish-Lithuanian Republic had retained any form of cultural autonomy and as the Polish high culture was even expurgated (apart from the region around Cracow under the jurisdiction of the Hapsburg Empire), literature and the arts became the vessels *par excellence* of the frustrated Polish nationalism, especially among the elite of the so-called "Great Emigration" (*Wielka Emigracja*) of the 1830s.[347] The hardships and violent failures of the Polish revolutionaries inspired a series of mythological symbols. One which is also expressed in the "Psalm of Love", and which has fed Polish nationalisms ever since, transfigured the vague idea of the Polish nation into "the Christ of the

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345 Amsellem, *L'imaginaire polonais*, p. 46.

346 "Just one, one miracle/ The Polish nobles – with the Polish people/ Like two choirs – one song!/ All the rest – the most illusive of illusions /All the rest – the most stained of all stains! /And the fatherland only there! /Just one, one miracle /The Polish nobles – with the Polish people /Living soul in a living body /United in a holy rage /From this marriage, one spirit /The great Polish nation alone /One will, one movement /Oh! Redemption only – there!" Zygmunt Krasiński, *Psalmy Przyszłości* [Psalms of the Future],1850, available at the Virtual Library of Polish Literature website, <http://literat.ug.edu.pl/psalmy/index.htm> [accessed 12.12.2010].

347 Contrary to the cities and areas controlled by the Russian Empire and the Kingdom of Prussia, which were undergoing a linguistic russification and a germanisation, the so-called Austrian policy was more tolerant allowing the Polish language to operate in schools, administration and universities, which form the basis of the cultural apparatus of the modern state. Amsellem, *L'imaginaire polonais*, pp. 150-151.

nations".[348] This messianic or prophetic reading, which goes beyond Polish nationalism and across many late modern ideologies, was particularly developed in Polish nationalist thought. Two other most renown poets of Polish romanticism, considered alongside Krasiński to be the three "Wise Men who guided Polish intellectual life across the desert,"[349] Adam Mickiewicz (1798-1855) and Juliusz Słowacki (1809-1849), who both took part in the Great Emigration, developed and promoted their own messianic versions of Polish nationalism.[350] Mickiewicz, who emigrated to Paris, did not only write literature which expressed this 'messianism' but also taught a class on the history of Poland at one of the most renowned French institutions, the *Collège de France*, which content was imbued in his prophetic 'illuminations':

> "Le dernier résultat tiré de l'histoire des peuples slaves, et plus particulièrement marqué par la marche historique de la Pologne, a été d'admettre le *Messianisme*, c'est-à-dire une série de révélations. […] L'âme la mieux développée est nécessairement chargée de conduire les hommes qui se trouvent sur les degrés inférieurs. […] Chaque nationalité est basée sur une révélation particulière. Chacune des grandes nationalités a été fondée par un seul homme, par une seule pensée, et elle n'a vécu que pour réaliser cette pensée."[351]

In Mickewicz's thought, as it appears in the preceding paragraphs, the particular revelation of the Polish nation (or nationality) is linked to the "main revelation of

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348 The expression "the Christ of nations" or "the Christ of the nations" does not appear in Krasiński's poem. It refers more particularly to one of the most celebrated Polish poets, Adam Mickiewicz, who elaborated the analogy between Jesus Christ and the Polish nation (the crucifixion of Poland being the disappearance of the state). See e.g. scene 5 "Cela księdza Piotra" in Adam Mickiewicz, *Dziady, Część III* [Halloween, part 3], Warsaw, Wydanie Literackie, 1998 [1832].

349 "[...] les mages qui guidèrent le vie intellectuelle polonaise dans la longue traversée du désert." François Bafoil [Ed.], *La Pologne*, Paris, Fayard/CERI, 2007, p. 49.

350 For works by Juliusz Słowacki which present messianic elements, see *Kordian* (1834) and *Anhelli* (1838) available at the Kulturalna Polska website: <http://slowacki.kulturalna.com/g-1.html> [accessed 22.12.2010]. Słowacki would move away from the analogy of the Polish nation with the Passion of the Christ to replace it with an analogy to a Swiss national hero, Winkelried, who would have sacrificed himself in battle to breach enemy lines leading to the victory of the Swiss confederates against Leopold III of Austria in 1386.

351 "The latest result of the history of the Slavic peoples, and particularly marked by the historical march of Poland, was to acknowledge the *Messianism*, which is a series of revelations. […] The most developed soul is necessarily in charge of leading those whose souls are at lower levels [of development]. […] Every nationality is based on a particular revelation. Each of all the great nationalities was founded by a single man, one single thought, and it has lived to realise this thought." Adam Mickewicz, *Les Slaves; Cours professé au Collège de France (1842-1844)*, Paris, Musée Adam Mickiewicz, 1914, pp. 9-10.

humankind", namely Christianity. The prophet, the "most developed soul" then appears to be none other but Mickiewicz himself, who announces that Poland, just like Christ, has to suffer for the other nations, before it is resurrected in a promised future.[352]

Leaving aside the contextual delusions of grandeur, there are two significations which transpire here: the personification of "nations", as bodies (which echoes the legal conceptualisation) and souls, and the "transnational" or rather transcultural recognition of the reality of each particular nation. While the formal connection to Christianity is a construct of Polish nationalism in particular, representations of religiosity appear independently of obvious references to religion.[353]

2. Empires of Myths

The aspect of nineteenth century nationalism, or rather of instituting nationalism – in the imaginary sense – goes in conjunction with the idea of the "awakening" of nations. These two facets of the instituting imaginary of nationalism form the conception of time which is predominant in late modernity: a time *line* for linear chronologies. While the prophetic significations, like the messianism of Polish poets, project this line into the future, the traditionally aristocratic conception of ancestry re-centred on the notion of "people" projects the line into the distant, mythological past. This oversimplification of history is at the heart of power legitimating narratives certainly beyond nationalism. Nevertheless, however simple the conception, the cultural contents of the political frame of the modern nation are not readily available. From the "fugitive idea" expressed by Sieyès, there is still a

352 Throughout the nineteenth century, popular "prophecies" – pamphlets and poems alike – would announce the forthcoming restoration of Poland. Amsellem, *L'imaginaire polonais*, p. 39.

353 The relationship between religion and nationalism has often been neglected by most modernists. Although it should not be seen as undermining the importance of insights of modernist theories of nationalism, it seems it is relevant to rethink this relationship within a modernist-like framework. Barbara-Ann J. Rieffer, "Religion and Nationalism: Understanding the Consequences of a Complex Relationship", *Ethnicities*, vol. 3, no. 2, June 2003, pp. 215-242. For approaches challenging the modernist frameworks, see e.g. David A. Bell, *The Cult of the Nation in France: Inventing Nationalism, 1680-1800*. Cambridge,MA, Harvard University Press, 2001; Adrian Hastings, *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion and Nationalism*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1997.

long way before the 'tools' of nationalist history are themselves refined and the national cultures homogenised into one.[354]

In France, substantial efforts to define the French people more consistently will lie in literally digging out the tokens of the dormant glorious past. The most significant myths of this glorious past will be the invention of the Gallic ancestry of the French people. As we have seen, Sieyès suggests a less singular ancestry, pointing to Roman, Gallic but Germanic roots as well, suggesting an order of preference for the two former in the revolutionary opposition to the noble orders. In the course of the nineteenth century, French nationalists would select the Gallic ancestry as unique, slowly relegating the Roman ancestry to history books and opposing the Germanic descent taken up by German nationalism. State institutions, imperial and republican alike, thus sought to elaborate a memory-history, or a 'pastness' to use Wallerstein's concept, centred on the Gallic line of descent.

While a certain number of minor literary works already mention the would-be national hero, Vercingetorix,[355] until the end of 1860s, the Roman greatness, symbolised by Julius Caesar, stands out as the dominant power legitimating symbol in state discourse.[356] .

Napoleon III had ordered excavations in view of discovering evidence of Caesar and his army. As excavations were being pursued, in the years 1861-1865, it was suggested that one of the sites was the site of Vercingetorix's last stand against Julius Caesar, the battle of Alésia – a fact which has never been confirmed although it is up until today promoted as such. Starting from there, the theme of Vercingetorix

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354 See Chapter 1, Part 2.1 of the present work. Rousseau was certainly one of the first to combine – notably in *Considération le gouvernement de Pologne* – cultural features with the political framing of the nation, such as it is formally expressed in Sieyès's pamphlet for instance. This further informs the correlation between the civic/political and ethnic/cultural conceptions of nations usually opposed. See Szporluk, Communism and Nationalism, p. 82.

355 Paul M. Martin traces the first literary references to the 1770s, in *Vercingétorix: Le politique, le stratège*, Paris, Editions Perrin, 2000, p. 229.

356 This is particularly the case during the First Empire (1804-1814), under, Napoleon Bonaparte, and the Second Empire (1852-1870), with Napoleon III, whose political model is called the *césarisme* in reference to the Roman consul. Also, Vercingétorix appears as a minor character in the rare Roman sources which mention the Gallic war chief, which in view of his late modern fame, presents us with the extent of the mythical construct of the character. Martin, *Vercingétorix*, p. 230.

became an additional theme in imperial propaganda, to the point that in 1866, a seven metre high statue of Vercingetorix was erected, supposedly under the traits of the emperor himself. The caption on the pedestal of the statue reads:

> "'La Gaule unie
> Formant une seule nation
> Animée d'un même esprit
> Peut défier l'univers'
> Vercingétorix aux Gaulois assemblés (César, *De Bello Gallico*, VII, 29)
> Napoléon III, Empereur des Français, à la mémoire de Vercingétorix"[357]

Behind the voice of Caesar,[358] Napoleon III addresses the French people, warning against voices of dissent and promoting a national unity behind the imperial enterprise. As historian Paul M. Martin notes, the French empire was indeed "defying the universe" with colonial projects across the globe.[359] The internal unity justified by the expansion of the empire echoes the centrality of empire in the unification of Britain. The main difference between the unifying aspect of the empire prior to the nineteenth century is precisely nationalism, i.e. the will to unite the entire population, and not simply the elites, behind the imperial enterprise, as it

357 "'The whole of Gaul united/ Forming one nation/ Animated by the same spirit/ Can defy the universe'/ Vercingetorix to the gathered Gauls (Caesar, *De Bello Gallico*, VII, 29)/ Napoleon III, Emperor of the French, to the memory of Vercingetorix."

358 Classical translations of the text of Caesar read an indirect speech attributed to Vercingetorix of which the meaning is quite different from the quote on the statue, and does not formally contain the term "nation". E.g.: "[he] would create a general unanimity throughout the whole of Gaul, the union of which not even the whole earth could withstand, and that he had it already almost effected." Caius Julius Caesar, *"De Bello Gallico" and Other Commentaries*, 7, 29, W. A. Macdevitt [trans.], E-Book, Project Guntenberg, 2004 [1915], <http://www.gutenberg.org/cache/epub/10657/pg10657.html> [accessed 21.12.2010]

359 In Crimea against the Ottoman Empire, in far east Asia (China, Cambodia), in the Pacific (New Caledonia), in Africa (across Senegal to the Red Sea), in Mexico in support of Emperor Maximilian and in support of the Polish insurrection against the Russian Empire. Martin, *Vercingétorix*, pp. 231-232. For an historical account on national imperialisms in the late nineteenth century, see Henri Wesseling, *Les empires coloniaux européens, 1815-1919*, Patrick Grilli [trans.], Paris, Gallimard, 2009 [2004], esp. pp. 235-246.

is expressed in the adaptation of Caesar's quote by Napoleon III, signed Emperor of *the French* (people).[360]

Although the invention of the Second Empire, the myth of Vercingetorix and the Gallic ancestry of the French people would become truly national under the Third Republic (1870-1940) and the creation of "National Education" curricula (*l'Education nationale*). But while Napoleon III combined the Roman and the Gallic themes, propaganda and education in the Third Republic would focus on "our ancestors the Gauls" (*nos ancêtres les Gaulois*),[361] a saying of the sole history textbook of the French Third and Fourth Republics which would be taught to six generations in the Republic and across the French empire.[362]

The theme of the savage or barbarian hero representing the core values of the nation appears in nearly all nineteenth century nationalisms. When particular national histories have a connection to ancient Roman history, these heroic figures are often praised for their opposition or resistance to the Roman Empire. *Lieux de mémoire* as statues or textbooks abound to institute their national significations.[363] In other cases and also in addition, medieval or even more recent figures are erected as national heroes. But while the mythologized historical figures represent the people, in many cases the state itself is also personified by allegorical figures. These often female

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360 The denomination is significant as prior to the constitutional monarchy instituted by the first stage of the French Revolution in 1791-1792, the official title of the rulers was "King of France" (*Roi de France)* Louis XVI was the first king to be have the official title constitutionally changed to "King of the French" (*Roi des Français*). King Louis-Philippe (1830-1848) would be the second and last King of the French. Napoleon Bonaparte would become the first *Empereur des Français.*

361 The original text reads "our forefathers, the Gauls" (*nos pères, les Gaulois*), Ernest Lavisse ; *Histoire de France, cours élémentaire* Paris, Armand Colin, 1913, p. 20.

362 Martin, *Vercingétorix*, pp. 236-237. It is also curious to note how after the military defeat of Napoleon III at Sedan in 1870 against Bismarck, which in a near misunderstanding allowed the proclamation of the Republic, the image of Vercingetorix turns away from the glorious imperial image to the image of the resisting hero, ready to sacrifice his life for his fatherland (*patrie*) with depictions suggesting Christ-like analogies. At the same time, the preference of state propaganda for the Gallic hero (instead of Joan of Arc or of the Frankish king Clovis) translates the anticlericalism of republican institutions. See Martin, *Vercingétorix*, pp. 233-237.

363 Among others, we can mention the Boudica (or Boadicea) in British nationalism, whose statue *Boadicea and her Daughters* created in the late nineteenth century can be found in London not far from Westminster, and also Arminius (Armin or Hermann) in German nationalism, who is commemorated by the *Hermannsdenkmal* (the monument of Herman) in the Teutoburg Forest, the presumed site of the victory of Germanic tribes over three Roman legions.

personifications are less often than historical figures the primary theme in national realms of memory. Along with other national symbols – like the cockerel in France, the lion in Britain or the eagle in Poland – they often appear as secondary elements on commemorative monuments and replace the effigies of traditional rulers, notably on coins and stamps.[364] The French *Marianne* is the classic example of such an allegorical figure, officially representing the French Republic since the early years of the Third Republic.

The allegory for the British Empire, *Britannia*, was revived under Queen Victoria (1837-1901) and the "new imperialism" of Britain in the late nineteenth century.[365] Historian Paul Ward writes about the allegory of Britain:

> "Britannia is an ambiguous figure, in that she is seen to carry weapons for her own defence, but the centrality of a female figure encourages men to her defence. On order to love one's country one must assign to that country features worth defending; the least problematic way to define the embodiment of the nation as its women and children which men can defend."[366]

What Ward elaborates further is the gendered representation of the nation to which these female allegories contribute to institute. The different roles attributed to men and women in nationalist imaginaries are representative of a traditional social conservatism. The services to the nation expected from the citizens – only men at the time – can best be summed up in military service, either in defence of the nation or to contribute to its expansion.[367] Women, for their part, are expected to be obedient and to serve those who would readily sacrifice their lives for the glory of the nation.[368]

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364 On realms of memory see Chapter 1, Part 2.1 and on commemorative monuments see Chapter 2, Part 1.2 of the present work.

365 Paul Ward, *Britishness since 1870*, London, Routledge, 2004, p.38. At the time the monarchy was also redesigned for the era of nationalism with an updated notion of "national duty", Ward, *Britishness*, p. 95. See also F. Harcourt, "Gladstone, monarchism and the "new" imperialism, 1868-1874", Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History, 14, 1985, pp. 20-51.

366 Ward, *Britishness*, p. 38.

367 In the case of France, see Weber, *Peasants into Frenchmen*, pp. 292-302.

368 Ward, *Britishness*, pp. 38-42. For a further inquiry in gender and nationalism, see Yuval-Davis, *Gender and Nation*. For an introductory theoretical overview, see Özkirmli, *Theories of Nationalism*, pp. 203-211

This gendered demarcation within the nation presents us with the fluctuating aspect of the line between citizenship and nationality, embedded in the ambivalence of the terms of nationalism. While sovereignty resides in the unifying notion of "people", citizenship (in the sense of political belonging) and nationality (in the sense of cultural belonging) have been a line of tension since the formulation of popular sovereignty, both for gender and social groups.[369] While the *integration* of women within the political nation – as far as European states are concerned – would be a long struggle throughout the twentieth century, social pressures for political recognition from working classes had increased in the course of the nineteenth century. Across the western hemisphere, what was more often termed patriotism was increasingly used as "a means of damping down potential conflicts within the urban, industrial society."[370]

In the course of the nineteenth century, national imaginaries had built up to the point that nationalist discourses could pacify the domestic fronts by directing the attention either to the formation of state institutions or to the expansion of the already existing state. Until 1914, this dynamics produced in Europe conflicts of borders between imperial and national states (and also would-be nations) which nevertheless did not hinder many European states from directing their efforts to the colonialist expansion. But on the eve of the Great War, the construction of "peoplehood" across Europe, with its systematic calls to arms, and the expansionist policies of states, conflated in what could also be conceived as the first major series of conflicts which would shape the European order of nations.

3. Modelled Territories

Until the nationalist education was put to the test of mass mobilisation in the First World War, the dynamics of aligning the construction of nationhood with existing (or struggling to exist) state structures was predominantly the source of territorial

369 See the enlightening study by Dominique Colas, *Citoyenneté et nationalité*, Paris, Gallimard, 2004 [2000].

370 Ward, *Britishness*, p. 95. Howard Zinn relates the systematic use of the "patriotic card" in governmental practices in the United-States. See e.g. Zinn, *A People's History of the United-States*, pp. 68, 295, 297, 363.

conflicts. For the colonialist nation-states, these conflicts were not extensive to the point of preventing their expansion across the globe. The aftermath of the First World War saw the collapse of the territorial European empires and is often presented in this perspective, focusing on the collapse of the Austrian, Ottoman and Russian empires, although the British empire and the French Republic also revisited their territorial claims. From the perspective of nationalism, it is concurrently one of the most dramatic and prolific periods the creation and consolidation of the order of nation-states across Europe.

In the case of the British Empire, Irish nationalism would formulate the most evident contention of Britishness and British territorial claims. The efforts of the Irish nationalists would eventually lead to the creation of the Irish Free State in 1922, a self-governing dominion of the British Empire, before becoming the independent Republic of Ireland in 1949. But the Anglo-Irish treaty of 1922 also resulted in the partition of the island of Ireland, which meant the creation of a unique *international* terrestrial border between the Republic of Ireland and the United Kingdom, and the only one to date in the British Isles. The question of Northern Ireland would prove much more complicated to solve.[371] The partition was perceived as the solution for the British state not only to maintain its interests in the region but to preserve the rights of its loyal citizens. This idea is symptomatic of the imperialist but also nationalist modes of thinking.[372] Both sides were considering the practical integrity of their national imaginings, or in other words, the territorialisation of their respective national ideas and interests. The partition embodies not only the balance of material power, but of symbolic power as well, between the two nations. Although the Irish claim appears as recognised, the British state relativises its

371 One of the consequences of the treaty was the breaking of the Irish civil war (1922-1923) between those who opposed the treaty – defending a integral nationalist agenda – and the forces of the new Irish state. Later, the so-called "troubles" in Northern Ireland (1960s – 1990s) would have consequences across the British and Irish states. See John McGarry [ed.], *Northern Ireland and the Divided World: The Northern Ireland conflict and the Good Friday Agreement in Comparative Perspective*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2001.

372 Britain would later apply the ill-fated formula to British India in 1947, partitioning its colony between what would become the independent states of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh.

domination, preventing the Irish project of national liberation to reach its ideal application.

For Polish nationalists, all efforts were increasingly directed to the creation of a modern Polish state, which entailed a promotion of the various nationalist ideas across the Polish-speaking territories and even more the recognition of the validity of the Polish claim to sovereignty by the powerful traditional allies of the Polish nationalists.[373] The opportunity for the Polish national movement also presented itself in the turmoil of the First World War. The material and symbolic conjunctures had certainly built up throughout the long nineteenth century enough to provide the necessary support for the national movement to succeed. But as Davies remarks, the Republic of Poland "created itself in the void left by the collapse of three partitioning powers."[374] The combination of circumstances resulted in the creation of a Polish state different from any of the projects which had been prepared either by Polish nationalists or any other of the various constructs projected by the neighbouring forces.[375]

The newly created state had yet no recognised borders. After the Posnanian War with Germany, which was an outgrowth of the world conflict, only provisions for its western border with Germany were established by the Treaty of Versailles in 1919.[376] The new Republic faced simultaneous opposition on all other fronts against all the other newly established states (Ukraine, Lithuania, Czechoslovakia and Soviet Russia).[377] The conflicts involving Poland for the establishment of borders of the new order in Central and Eastern Europe lasted until 1925. The core of these dramatic years was certainly in the years of the Polish-Soviet War (1919-1921) at

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373 Predominantly France, but also Britain. Bafoil, *La Pologne*, pp. 56-59.

374 Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, p. 291.

375 The main Polish project was Dmowski's, who with the National committee in Paris, lobbied the Allied governments for the creation of a client state of Russia. The Bolsheviks also had plans to construct a "Red Bridge" with revolutionary Germany. There were also various projects for a puppet state put forward in the preceding years by pre-Soviet Russia, Germany and Austria. See Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, pp. 291-292.

376 The conflict around the German-Polish border was not settled until the Silesian Convention of 1922 in Geneva.

377 For a detailed account see Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, pp. 292-298.

which time the Polish military victory validated the claim for Polish independence, both domestically and internationally. The battle of Warsaw in August 1920 would later be known as the "Miracle of the Vistula" (*Cud nad Wisłą*), the symbol of the national military successes, granting the leader of the Polish army and leader of the provisional government since 1918, Józef Piłsudski, the status of national hero.[378] The liberal-democracies of the West were relieved by the resolution of the Polish-Soviet war in favour to their ally, which the following quasi-mythological formulation by Lord D'Abernon, the contemporary British Ambassador in Berlin, sums up :

> "The Battle of Tours saved our ancestors from the Yoke of the Koran; it is probable that the Battle of Warsaw saved Central, and parts of Western Europe from a more subversive danger – the fanatical tyranny of the Soviet."[379]

With the issue of borders stabilised, the Second Republic of Poland then faced a different but equally fundamental problem: the integration, both material and symbolic of a large territory which covered the three territorial partitions and their respective administrations but also large and numerous ethnic minorities (representing nearly one third of the population). Under the rallying call of "Polishness" (*Polskość*), the leading circles of the state were "unashamedly nationalist."[380] But despite the radically and even extreme nationalist policies of the Republic throughout the inter-war period,[381] scarce were the resources, material and symbolical to permanently institute these policies. They also faced ideological opposition; in particular from Ukrainian nationalists who had seen their project fail to the favour of the Polish state. The main factors which provided the conflictual

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378 Józef Piłsudski represented one of the alternative formulations to Roman Dmowski's ethnic and catholic project of Polish national restoration, which was based on the idea of a "Greater Poland" inspired by the Polish-Lithuanian commonwealth. See Bafoil, *La Pologne*, pp. 87-93.

379 Lord D'Abernon, *The Eighteenth Decisive Battle of World History*, London, 1931, p. 9, quoted in Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, p. 297. This also presents us with another reproduction of a transcultural myth for the Polish nationalist myth of the "bulwark of Christendom", which dates back to the the political discourse of Polish nobles in the seventeenth century, see J. Urwanowicz, "La Pologne, rempart de la chrétienté. Note sur une mentalité dans la deuxième moitié du XVII siècle", *Odrodzenie i Reformacja w Polsce*, Vol. 29, Warsaw, 1984, pp. 185-199.

380 Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, p. 298.

381 The central ideological formulation was called *Sanacja* (sanation, or healing), which with Piłsudski, defined the policies of the Polish state in the primacy of national unity.

Polish society a reason for maintaining a form of cohesion, were to be found – as it often is – in the political evolution in the neighbouring states. In the 1930s, "the repellent prospect of incorporation into Nazi Germany or Stalinist Russia gave all Polish citizens, irrespective of their differences, a strong sense of common interest."[382] These fears would eventually prove to be justified as Poland would succumb to both its neighbours in 1939.

Regarding France, although there is only one disputed international border to the east with Germany, the effects of this dispute run from 1870 to 1945 and play a substantial role in the ideological evolution both in France and Germany, as well as in the major conflicts which would shake the global order. After Napoleon III was defeated at Sedan in 1870, the question of Alsace-Lorraine defined the bilateral relations, but also their respective national imaginaries. The defeat at Sedan was briefly presented as the repetition of the defeat at Alésia in 52 BCE, the Prussians having replaced the Romans.[383] A passage form the 1944 *Instructions for British Servicemen in France*, aimed at bolstering morale and justifying the reasons behind the war, expresses the common British and French nationalist outlook on the history of the "North-East Frontier" of France:

> "It is this frontier which the Germans crossed in 1870, in 1914 and again in 1940 – there are people in France who have suffered three German invasions!; and it was because of this frontier, and, of course, because of German ambitions and German strength, that the French were forced to introduce conscription as long ago as at the time of the Revolution [...]"[384]

A curious way of explaining one of the core features of the construction of nationhood in France, regardless of the imperialist "ambitions" of the French empires. The rest of the passage speaks for itself. The idea of France as a model of civic nationalism was properly constructed in the decades following Sedan in contrast to the claims laid by Germany on the Alsace-Lorraine region which were of an ethnic, or more precisely, of a linguistic nature. Cultural arguments were in

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382 Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, p. 304.

383 Martin, *Vercingetorix*, p. 233.

384 *Instructions for British Servicemen in France 1944*, University of Oxford, Bodleian Library, 2005 (pages not numbered).

disfavour of the French claim on the region. The consequence was a switch from the traditional view of the formation of nations, which amalgamated history, language, race and politics, into a linearity focused on the idea of freedom – without in fact refuting any of the other arguments.

The best example is certainly Ernest Renan who is still often uncritically cited as having written the paragon expression of civic nationalism in his famous conference "What is a Nation?": "an everyday plebiscite."[385] Tzetan Todorov has analysed the change in Renan's approach as the original formulation of the opposition between civic and ethnic nationalism. Nevertheless, this formulation consists in retaining a deeply rooted ambivalence of the "nation of free choice", as promoted by Renan, and appears more of a construct of the mind than the expression of any social reality.

> "Mais ce n'est qu'ainsi que Renan parvient à revendiquer l'Alsace-Lorraine pour la France, sans pour autant renoncer à ses principes [humanistes]: selon tous les autres critères – maintenant répudiés – les Alsaciens et les Lorrains peuvent être plus proche de l'Allemagne ; mais leur volonté est de rester français. De cette manière, on valorise ce que les hommes ont de plus humains ; se fonder sur les déterminismes divers, ou sur l'histoire, revient à privilégier ce qu'ils ont en commun avec les animaux. En somme selon Renan, on a le choix entre deux conceptions de la nation. Ou bien on la pense à la manière d'une espèce animale, et donc d'une race […]. Ou bien on définit la nation comme le consentement volontaire de ses sujets […]."[386]

Todorov notes that Renan's philosophy goes against the tide of the dominant ideas of his time, including his own before Alsace-Lorraine became an issue of national integrity.[387] We can also note that it goes against the dominant beliefs of the time regarding what constitutes the humanity of humanity.[388] But notwithstanding the

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385 "L'existence d'une nation est […] un plébiscite de tous les jours." Renan, "Qu'est-ce qu'une nation?", Chapter 3.

386 "But it is only in this way that Renan manages to claim Alsace-Lorraine for France, without the need to renounce his [humanist] principles: according to all the other criteria – now repudiated – the inhabitants of Alsace and of Lorraine may be more related to Germany; but their will is to remain French. In this way, what is given value is what is the most human in men. To rely on various determinisms, or on history, means privileging what men have in common with animals. In short, Renan presents us with a choice between two conceptions of the nation. Either we think it up as a sort of animal species, that is, a race […]. Or we define the nation as the voluntary consent of its subjects [...]." Tzvetan Todorov, *Nous et les autres: Le réflexion française sur la diversité humaine*, Paris, Editions du Seuil, 1989, p. 304.

387 Todorov, *Nous et les autres*, p. 297.

388 See Chapter 2, Part 2.1 of the present work.

differences, Renan's ambiguous and certainly idealist conceptualisations continue to reflect the dominant positivist trends of late nineteenth century science. To resolve all the epistemological and indeed practical problems of the translation of individual will into a collective will, Renan turns to history.[389] Despite having relegated it to the rank of the "determinisms" and savagery of the animal kingdom, history – meaning national history, with its heroic and glorious past and the cult of forefathers, etc. – appears once more as the definitive criterion of what would, ironically and up to this date, be praised as "civic" nationalism.

4. Rationalised Races

The Scientist Turn

A focus on Renan's thought brings us to another important set of significations around the term of "race." Similarly to the term "nation", "race" would be given a refined signification in the process of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[390] Racism, considered fundamentally as the belief in the division of humankind in different species, has certainly always been part of social imaginaries under one form or another.[391] What is historically significant is the basis on which such divisions were performed, both symbolically and in practice, which have systematically, although not necessarily, lead to being conflated with xenophobia. But as we shall see, with all its variants, racism has never stopped being a "true 'total social phenomenon'."[392]

In the ancient régimes, the dominant belief, particularly on the side of the elites, was that race and class (or cast) were synonymous. The "blue blood" and fair complexion of the nobles could not be conceived as having anything in common

389 Todorov, *Nous et les autres*, p. 305.

390 Renan, in spite of his humanistic predispositions, elaborates a concept of cultural race, or "linguistic race", which applies – with all the contradictions it implies – to an ethnic conception of the nation. See Todorov, *Nous et les autres*, pp. 195-202.

391 See Castoriadis "Reflexions sur le racisme", pp. 32-36, in *Le monde morcelé*, pp. 29-46.

392 Balibar, "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?", pp. 17-28, in Balibar and Wallerstein, *Race, Nation and Class*, p. 17.

with the dark and dirty complexions of those who worked the earth.[393] Later, in the second half of the nineteenth century, under the aegis of Darwinism and its somewhat perverted by-products such as social Darwinism and scientific racism,[394] race was provided with a much refined and rationalised signification, similar in quality and range to that of "nation." It would thus be impossible in the frame of this work to elaborate in depth the historical case of racism.[395] Nevertheless, the dialectical relationship between racism and nationalism makes it necessary to briefly clarify two points of articulation between the two grids of significations which have had major consequences in the evolution of nationalism.

The first of these points of articulation is the ideology of National-Socialism, which although often presented as an extreme nationalism, is primarily an extremely rationalised racism within the framework of nationalism.[396] The Nuremberg Race Laws of 1935 stand out as the most obvious institutionalisation of the scientific racism and anti-Semitism of Nazism.[397] Combining elements of eugenics, medicine, xenophobia and scientific racism, the psychotic nationalism of Nazi Germany established a strict hierarchy between populations, "races", which were ranked in accordance to their inadequacy to the project of the reproduction of the pure Aryan race.[398] In conjunction to the singularity of the Nazi regime and its ideology, it is also inscribed in a continuum of actions, reactions and retro-actions, which have

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393 Throughout the Medieval Ages, a dark complexion referred to the peasantry more than it referred to the Moors for instance. But in the age of colonialism and nationalism, the signification was readjusted for the colonised non-white populations, which expressed the superiority of the white race, with all its "shades."

394 On social Darwinism, see Chapter 2, Part 2.1 of the present work.

395 For an introductory inquiry into the 'subtleties' of racism, see e.g. Michel Wieviorka, *Le racisme, une introduction*, Paris, Editions la Découverte, 1998; Alana Lentin and Ronit Lentin [eds.], *Race and State*, Newcastle, Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006.

396 These racialist and anti-Semitic elements, independently of all connections and the particular iniquity of the Italian fascist regime of Benito Mussolini, would distinguish historical Fascism from national-socialism, at least until the institution of anti-Semitic legislation in Fascist Italy in 1938. Renzo De Felice, *Brève histoire du fascisme*, Jérôme Nicols [trans.], Paris, Editions Louis Audibert, 2002 [2000], p. 108.

397 The 1935 "Chart to describe the Nuremberg law" alone suffices to get a sense of the tragic pseudo-rational racism of the Nazi regime. A digital copy of the original chart held at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Collection is available online at the Wikipedia website: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Nuremberg_laws.jpg> [last accessed 12.01.2011]

398 Enzo Colloti, *Hitler and Nazism*, Valerio Lintner [trans.], New York, Interlink Books, 1999 [1995], pp. 70-78.

involved a wide array of what constitutes the formation of the modern welfare state. In an enlightening contribution, Detlev J.K. Peukert analyses how Nazi ideology answered to the crisis in the growth of the modern welfare state during the Weimar Republic. Although a deviant monstrosity, national-socialism appears as a redefinition of utopian social policies associated with the welfare state. It symbolically shifted the idea of health or purity to the social body (the *Volk*), which could survive the deaths of its individual members. But the process of social purification requested the destruction of all components which were defined as sick or deviant, indeed not even human, by the Nazi regime.[399] The end of the Second World War led to the relativisation of scientific racism and the banalisation of nationalism in European states. In the decades after the fall of the Third Reich, the welfare policies, particularly in Britain and France, would still be imbued in a form of utopian nationalism – in which the destructive racism of national-socialism was replaced in reaction to Nazism by a humanistic paradigm – on the role of the state in caring for the nation.

Liberated Poland did not have the luxury of the western states to implement such welfare policies. Its territory having shifted to the west by a few hundred kilometres, the central problem in the region was the definition of belonging. The solutions proved to be harsh and pragmatic, in part as a reaction to the violence of the Nazi occupation, and focused on ethnic and linguistic considerations which recall the treatment of these questions in the aftermath of the First World War.[400] The result was a massive forced migration across the new borders which resulted from the remodelling of the states in Central and Eastern Europe. In the chaos of the aftermath of the war, all states wondered who their nationals were and how to sort out the populations.[401] As the methods can best be described as expulsions, what the whole process illustrates is the nationalistic mindset of European authorities which

399 Detlev J.K. Peukert, "The Genesis of the 'Final Solution' from the Spirit of Science", David F. Crew [ed.], *Nazism and German society, 1933-1945*, London, Routledge, 1994, pp. 274-299, p. 285.

400 Pierre-Frédéric Weber, *Le triangle RFA-RDA-Pologne (1961-1975): Guerre froide et normalisation des rapports Germano-Polonais*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 2007, p. 215.

401 Weber, *Le triangle RFA-RDA-Pologne*, p. 217.

could not fathom any other means of answering the questions at hand, but by establishing a semblance of homogeneous populations within their respective territories. The fact that throughout the twentieth century, and in fact across the globe, the vast majority of conflicts have been irreverent of any other possible solution, however complex, proves how the core doctrine of nationalism – one state for one people defined accordingly – is deeply entrenched in the imaginaries of the twentieth century.[402] For the Polish authorities and its neighbours the objective set out in resolving their issue with Germany was fairly straightforward,[403] and contained a sense of retribution for the war, which Pierre-Frédéric Weber's dramatic analysis expresses:

> "On peut polémiquer sur les intentions respectives, les méthodes employées au cours des étapes successives de ce processus, le but initial n'en reste pas moins irréfutable : résoudre de façon *totale et définitive* ce qui était alors perçu comme le problème de la présence allemande à l'est." [emphasis added][404]

The Cultural Turn

The second and final point of articulation leads us to briefly consider the post-World War II evolution of the idea of nationalism in Europe. While the term of nationalism became less acceptable in reaction the its totalitarian take over in the preceding decades. The political formations which still positively referred to nationalism where either the liberation movements in the colonies, or the regional nationalist movements and the far-right wing parties in established nation-states. This further evolved into the banal nationalism analysed by Billig and presented in the first chapter.[405]

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402 The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa after the abolition of the Apartheid regime stands as one famous exception, which despite its shortcomings, presents us with alternative attempts.

403 In the case of the German-Polish relations after the Second World War, the division between the Soviet and American spheres of influence added to the complexity of the situation.

404 "There can be a controversy about the respective intentions or the methods employed in the successive steps of the process [of expulsions], but the original objective remains obvious: resolve in a total and definitive manner what was then perceived as the problem of German presence in the east." Weber, *Le triangle RFA-RDA-Pologne*, p. 222.

405 See Chapter 1, Part 2.3 of the present work.

A concurrent evolution in racist xenophobia was informed by the banalisation or relativisation of the traditional nationalist discursive forms. Since scientific racism had formally become untenable, the evolution of racism came to be analysed by the 1980s as "neo-racism", "cultural racism" or as "differentialist racism." This new racism apparently suppresses the hierarchical component dear to scientific racism, presenting in a reversed relativism the equality and hence incompatibility of the holistic cultures it takes for granted.[406] Balibar, in inquiring how 'new' this racism really is, suggests it is rather a discursive rearrangement of long-running narratives of xenophobia such as modern anti-Semitism, but this could apply to social forms of exclusion long before the modern period.[407] Balibar further elaborates how this reconvened racist discourse constitutes the framework in which the biological theme of racism is renewed. Although originally expressed in the extreme nebulae of far-right political movements, the culturalist approach also drifts into the dominant neoliberal ideology:

> "This latent presence of the hierarchic theme today finds its chief expression in the priority accorded to the individualistic model (just as, in the previous period, openly inegalitarian racism, in order to postulate an essential fixity of racial types, had to presuppose a differentialist anthropology […]. In this way, we see how the *return of the biological theme* is permitted and with it the elaboration of new variants of the biological 'myth' within the framework of a cultural racism. Even [the] tendentially biologistic ideologies, however, depend fundamentally upon the 'differentialist revolution'. What they aim to explain is not the constitution of races, but the vital importance of cultural closures and traditions for the accumulation of individual aptitudes, and, most importantly, the 'natural' bases of xenophobia and social aggression." [emphasis in original][408]

406 We would like to argue that racism does not really apply to the range of phenomena of social exclusion which it usually describes, as exclusionary racism *per se* (the belief in human races) appears as only part of it and recent discoveries have established that the norm until 20,000 years ago in the history of humanity when only our current species *Homo sapiens* survived, was the coexistence of various human races (the ill-fated Neanderthals being one the last to disappear), see e.g. . To our mind, xenophobia appears as a better – although far from perfect – term to encompass the varieties of these exclusionary practices. Given the fact that racism is commonly used in this overarching sense, we will retain it in the remainder for the sake of clarity.

407 Balibar, "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?" pp.23-24.

408 Balibar, "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?" pp.25-26.

Although nationalism cannot be simply associated with racism and xenophobia, we observe in the evolution of racist ideology the pattern of inclusion which we have observed in the transformation of nationalism as a dominant imaginary trend. Furthermore, considering the contemporary neoliberal make-up of dominant discourses across political institutions of established nation-states, it suggests how nationalism and racism combine their ambivalences and significations in the reproduction of the neoliberal order. The analysis of political discourses centred on the theme of "national identity", which is the motivational thread in the following chapter, should prove enlightening in this regard.

– Chapter 4 –
Contemporary Sections

– Part 1 –
Political (Dis)Integrations: The Others Within

1. Religious Demarcations

Poland is widely perceived as one the 'catholic nations' of Europe, alongside Ireland or Spain for instance. But the importance of religion in Poland needs to be relativised:

> "The Catholic narrative of Polish history is far more than a recognition that Roman Catholicism was and is important in Poland: it is an ideologically loaded conceptual framework that gives specific meaning to the past and helps determine what is remembered and what is forgotten."[409]

It suggests, as Geneviève Zubrzycki contends, that religion has played a primary role only for a certain form of Polish nationalism, and further, that it did not always play a role for Polish nationalism.[410] While the catholic community has been massively dominant in post-1945 Poland, the religious make-up of the populations in the Polish territories has always been diverse. The social and political dominance of Christianity in the European world was commonplace until the institution of a generalised form of secularism in the twentieth century. The French *laicité*, epitomised by the laws separating Church and state in 1905, is traditionally presented as the paradigmatic expression of secular institutionalisation. It is certainly epochal, but in the course of the twentieth century, constitutional and legal measures would be implemented across most liberal European states. In 1919, for instance, the newly established Republic of Poland legally recognised its minorities, granting its large Jewish minority political equality.[411]

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409 Brian Porter, "The Catholic Nation: Religion, Identity, and the Narratives of Polish History", *The Slavic and East European Journal*, Vol. 45, No. 2, 2001, pp. 289-299, p. 291.

410 Geneviève Zubrzycki, *The Crosses of Auschwitz: Nationalism and Religion in Post-Communist Poland*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2006, p. 36.

411 In 1867 and 1869 respectively, Prussia and Austria had already granted the Jewish minorities on their partitions political recognition. Adam Dylewski, *Les Juifs polonais*, Uta Hrehorowicz [trans.], Bielsko Biała, Editions Pascal, 2004, pp. 14-15.

It would be a nationalist simplification to date the significance of Catholicism in the formation of the late modern Polish nation prior to the formulation of Polish nationalism.[412] Roots can certainly be found in Sarmaticism, and the messianism of Polish romantic nationalism has played a definitive role in the development of a Polish national culture permeated with religion. But the idea of a culturally exclusive (and thus religiously) homogenised Polish nation was first formulated by Roman Dmowski.[413] As a fairly accurate description of a social reality, it is a development of the second half the twentieth century whose causes have more to do with tragic policies and influences of foreign powers than with the designs of Polish reactionary nationalists of the first half of the twentieth century.[414]

Before the partitions, the Polish-Lithuanian Republic, due to its particular tolerance, had throughout centuries attracted the largest Jewish community in Europe.[415] In 1939, there were 3.35 million "Poles of the Jewish faith"[416] of a total population of about 35 million.[417] More than one third of the inhabitants of Warsaw were Jewish citizens. In 1945, an estimated one tenth of Polish Jews had survived the Holocaust, and many left for Palestine or the West. What this meant for the make-up of the post-war Polish society was the near disappearance of what had been its largest minority

412 This by no means aims at reducing the role of Catholicism but rather to slightly re-frame it. It is obvious it has played a century-old role in Polish politics, not the least considering the fact that the Polish state was landlocked between the German protestant states in the west and Orthodox Russia in the east. On the role of the Church in the nineteenth century, see Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, pp. 152-157 and Zubrzycki, *The Crosses of Auschwitz*, pp. 34-76.

413 In distinction, at first, to the rather imperialist and multicultural nationalist project of the first president of the Second Republic, Józef Piłsudski, although both relied extensively on the ideal of the Polish *szlachta* . See Roman Dmowski, *Myśli nowoczesnego polaka* [Thoughts of a modern Pole], Wrocław, Nortom, 2008 [1933], p. 114; Bafoil, *La Pologne*, pp. 87-88.

414 In the 1930s, like in many other European states, the government of Poland took a radical authoritative turn. What the relative republican liberalism had established in the early years of the Republic, prompted by the League of Nations, was replaced by more overt nationalist policies and the treaty on minorities was abrogated. Dylewski, *Les Juifs polonais*, p. 15; Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, p. 192.

415 Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, p. 176.

416 *The First Congress of the Founders of the Association of Poles of the Jewish Faith*, Art. 1, quoted in Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, p. 190. For the figures, p. 194 and Dylewski, *Les Juifs polonais*, pp. 65-66.

417 Jerzy Lukaszewski, "La population de la Pologne pendant et après la seconde guerre mondiale", *Revue de géographie de Lyon*, Vol. 38 no.3, 1963, pp. 225-254, p. 228.

and the marginalisation of its distinctive cultural features, such as the Yiddish language.[418]

The combination of the Nazi genocide and the expulsions of German nationals after the war left Polish society, for the first time in its history, in a state of relative homogeneity which would later be put to 'good use', so to say, by the national communist policies.[419] Yet, taking also into consideration the creation of the nation-state of Israel which further precipitated the emigration of Jews from Europe, we can observe how effective the transcultural dynamics of nationalism already was by the 1950s.[420] The Jews who remained in what had become since 1948 the People's Republic of Poland (*Polska Reczpospolita Ludowa*, PRL) were predominantly secular. In spite of the Stalinist claim of having resolved the question of nationalities, the Soviet block in general was organised according to nationalist principles.[421] In Poland, the result of the 'Destalinisation' which followed Stalin's death in 1953 was national communism, a subtle compromise between symbolic independence and practical subordination to the Kremlin. One of the major political crises it faced was the crisis of 1968, which resolved itself in the clash between national and international affairs and resulted in an anti-Zionist policy across the Soviet block.[422] Davies explains the absurd tragedy of the aftermath of the 1968 crisis in Poland:

> "As a result of the disturbances of March 1968, the great majority of Poland's surviving Jews were forced to emigrate. In the course of a few months, the country's Jewish community was reduced from c. 40,000 to a mere thousand. It was a shameful episode which could be presented abroad as a resurgence of

418 By 1956, more than 95% of the 200,000 Jews who had remained in Poland after the war had emigrated. Dylewski, *Les Juifs polonais*, p. 18.

419 According to Zubrzycki, "The Second World War and important structural changes in its aftermath would generalize and ossify the Polak-katolik [Pole-as-catholic] stereotype." *The Crosses of Auschwitz*, p. 60.

420 On Jewish nationalisms and the creation of the modern Jewish nation-state, see the ground breaking study by Shlomo Sand, *Comment le peuple juif fut inventé? De la Bible au sionisme*, Sivan Cohen-Wiesenfled and Levana Frenk [trans.], Paris, Arthème Fayard/Flammarion, 2008.

421 Particularly the satellite states in central and eastern Europe. See Chapter 1, Part 1.1 of the present work.

422 E.g. the 1967, the victory of Israel in the Arab-Israeli War, better known as the Six-Day War become a symbol of political dissidence in Poland, and pro-Israeli sympathies became anti-Soviet expressions. Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, pp. 440-445.

> Polish 'anti-semitism'. For if the initial wave of expellees contained a genuine core of ex-Stalinists and of former political criminals who had been purged from the Party with good reason, the purge soon turned into an undisguised attack on all persons of Jewish origin, irrespective of their conduct. Sadly or ironically, many of the victims were people who for one reason or another had voluntarily chosen to stay in Poland when most of their relatives and co-religionists had left at the end of the war."[423]

Davies concludes that contrary to the traditional purges which occurred in the Soviet Union, "no one was actually killed." But scars were deep both for those who had to leave, those who chose to leave in face of such injustice and those who remained behind, whose non-Jewish origins simply made them "dissidents" leading some to interrogation and prison cells rather than abroad. The consequences for the anti-totalitarian movement in Poland were also dramatic:

> "Mars 1968 a sonné le désastre moral et intellectuel de la génération qui avait cru pouvoir contribuer à rendre le monde meilleur et remettre en cause les fondements du totalitarisme en projetant une vision idéalisée du marxisme."[424]

This also presents us with how deeply entrenched secular and left-wing ideologies were, at least in the educated classes of the time. Their failed attempt to engage a revision of the communist regime would eventually lead the democratic movement of the 1970s and 1980s to join forces with political movements under the wing of the Catholic Church of Poland.[425] The role of the Church in providing a haven for political dissidence across the political spectrum and the 1978 politically significant election of Karol Wojtyła as Pope of the Roman Catholic Church were additional socio-historical significations which prompted the becoming and (self-) perception of the Polish society as a catholic nation.[426] And yet, the situation was more

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423 Davies, *God's Playground, Volume II*, p. 442-443.

424 "March 1968 resulted in the moral and intellectual disaster of a generation which believed it could contribute to changing the world for better and could challenge the foundations of totalitarianism by projecting an idealised vision of Marxism." Cyril Bouyeure, *L'invention du politique: Une biographie d'Adam Michnik*, Lausanne, Les Editions Noir sur Blanc, 2007, p. 173.

425 See for instance Adam Michnik's essay *Kościół, lewica, dialog* [The Church and the Left], Paris, Institut Littéraire, 1977, which promoted the rapprochement between the secular anti-totalitarian left and the Catholic institution. This dialogue was certainly decisive in the formation and success of *Solidarność*.

426 On the relationship between the democratic dissidence and the Church see Bouyeure, *L'invention du politique*, pp. 173-195.

complex, having formed into a chiasmus of the different forces and institutions which presents all the intricacies of the traditional conceptualisation of nationalism:

> "There thus existed, under Communism, a double tension between ethnic and civic nationalism: that of the state's official civic discourse in contrast with its significant ethnic practices and/or effects, and that of the church's ethno-religious discourse in contrast with its civic practices, since it served as the umbrella institution of the opposition."[427]

In the decades following the collapse of the Soviet Union, the Third Republic of Poland presented a rearrangement of the different parties which had joined forces under the unique formation which *Solidarność* ("solidarity") was. In the constitutionally secular state and in the face of a society developing under the auspices of consumerist individualism, the position of the Church has been less influential.[428] Right to centre politicians have also often used the aura of the Church and of the catholic faith to attract voters.[429] But more than the Church, Catholicism weighs heavily on contemporary Polish society as part of the larger negotiation of social significations. It is rarely questioned, but the questions which Adam Michnik regularly asks in the pages of the social-democratic daily, *Gazeta Wyborcza* ("electoral gazette") which he founded in 1989, are symptomatic of the predicament of Polish society:

> "W jakiej Polsce chcemy żyć? W Polsce kalumnii, prowokacji i pogardy dla człowieka, w Polsce PiS, czy też w Polsce wspólnej, gdzie dla wszystkich jest

427 Zubrzycki, *The Crosses of Auschwitz*, p. 75.

428 In spite of the numerous attempts to maintain its political role. The undermining of its position has caused a certain number of mixed reactions for church officials. The most radical, although marginal, are certainly the anti-Semite, nationalistic and creationist ravings of Tadeusz Rydzyk, a controversial priest who founded the extremist *Radio Maryja* (radio Marie) in 1991. As a sign of the more general reactionary tendency of the turn of the century, he further extended his media group by founding the daily *Nasz Dziennik* ("our daily") and the private television channel *Trwam* (I endure).

429 With relatively little effect, as as the case for Lech Wałęsa in the 1995 presidential elections, who despite his mythical personae, lost against the post-communist candidate, Aleksander Kwaśniewski.

> miejsce, gdzie - mówiąc słowami poety – prawo zawsze prawo znaczy, a sprawiedliwość – sprawiedliwość?"[430]

Beyond the question of religion, the line of tension between the liberal and traditionalist imaginaries, which Michnik expresses here in his own political language, is certainly the deeper line of the struggle in the social negotiation of meaning. The popular reactions which followed the death of the right-wing traditionalist and populist president Lech Kaczyński in a plane crash in April 2010 express how this line of social struggle runs both deeply and in the open.[431] In the first days of the national week of mourning which followed the tragedy, a group of boy and girl scouts erected a cross in front of the presidential palace in Warsaw to commemorate the victims. By the time the week of mourning was over, the cross sparked a wild controversy between members of the public.[432] A large group of supporters organised a round the clock vigil to ensure the cross would not be moved. The arguments in favour of maintaining the cross in its original location was a curious mixture of extreme catholic nationalism, anti-Semitism and anti Russian sentiment, cloaked in conspiracy theories. In interviews gathered at the time of the presidential elections held two months after the crash, one reads how "Poland is no more […]. We had Lech [Kaczyński] as president – a real Pole and a catholic, and they took him and murdered him." The plural pronoun referred to, depending on the versions of the conspiracy theories, either the Russians or the political opponents of

430 "In which Poland do we want to live? In a Poland of slander, provocation and contempt for human individuals, in the Poland of PiS ["Law and Justice", traditionalist right-wing party then in power], or in a common Poland, where there is a space for everyone, where – to speak like the poet – the law always means the law, and justice means justice?" Michnik, "Długi cień oszczerstwa" [the long shadow of slander], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 19.10.2007. In 1989, in the first issues of the daily, he already formulated these questions in a nearly identical way, Bouyeure, *L'invention du politique*, p. 349.See also Zubrzycki, *The Crosses of Auschwitz*, p. 76.

431 In a tragica turn of history, Lech Kaczyński, alongside 88 Polish state officials, died in a plane crash at Smolensk in Russia on the 10 April 2010, on their way to commemorate the massacre of Katyń by the NKVD, the Soviet political police, in 1940.

432 As Zubrzycki's analysis shows (focusing on another controversial event of placing crosses at Auschwitz by ultranationalist catholics in 1998), the symbol of the cross had become in the times of PRL, alongside other signs, part of a nationalist iconography "borrowed from Romantic messianism. […] together with other symbols, it created a language to express rebellion against the authorities." *The Crosses of Auschwitz*, p. 69.

Kaczyński who some even portrayed as "Jews in disguise".[433] People in the street reacted in various ways to such displays of obscure defeatism, their reactions ranging from disbelief to rejection, which at times resolved into violence.

Beyond the symbol of the tragedy, it also came to represent what many have termed a "street war" between its proponents and opponents.[434] The rows caused by the question of the cross were also fuelled by the way the issue was brought up on the political stage. On many occasions, it became a political weapon in the speeches of Jarosław Kaczyński – twin brother to the deceased president and candidate to his succession.[435] The attacks were primarily aimed against the other main presidential candidate, Bronisław Komorowski from the centre-right liberal party, Civic Platform (*Platforma Obywatelska*, PO):

> "Jeśli Bronisław Komorowski usunie krzyż spod Pałacu Prezydenckiego będzie jasne, kim jest, i po której jest stronie, w różnego rodzaju sporach dotyczących polskiej historii i polskich powiązań. Ten krzyż to symbol, można go będzie przenieść, jeśli stanie tam pomnik. Każdy, kto uważa inaczej dopuszcza się moralnego nadużycia."[436]

Placing the question on the level of morality can be interpreted to be a populist touch. The reference to Polish history and its implied 'correct' interpretation signify the historical demarcations in the struggle for the imaginary institution of a literally civil society and secular institutions in the face of reactionary forces. It also confirms Brian Porter's analyses quoted at the beginning of this section, on the relationship between Catholicism and Polish nationalism as "an ideologically loaded conceptual framework" which determines a particular vision of Polishness.

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433 "Mieliśmy prezydenta Lecha - prawdziwego Polaka i katolika, to go wzięli i zamordowali. A jak po północy wygrywał wybory jego dzielny brat Jarosław, drugi katolik i Polak, to je sfałszowali. Polski już nie ma", Dominika Olszewska, "To już jest wojna pod krzyżem" [war has broke under the cross], *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 15.07.2010.

434 See previous footnote.

435 He also was the first prime minister under the presidency of his brother in a coalition government (2005-2007) with the League of Polish Families (*Liga Polskich Rodzin*, LPR, ultra-catholic) and Self-Defence (*Samoobrona*, left-wing populist). He is also the co-founder and president of the PiS party.

436 "If Bronisław Komorowski removes the cross from under the Presidential palace, it will be clear who he [really] is, and on which side he is on, on a number of contested issues related to Polish history and Polish ties. This cross is a symbol, it will be possible to place it somewhere else, if a monument stand in its place. Anyone who thinks otherwise commits a moral abuse." Jarosław Kaczyński, TVN24 (news channel), 16.07.2010.

Eventually, after many discursive tribulations, the social negotiations around the cross commemorating the victims of the presidential plane crash was resolved by moving it from the presidential palace to the nearby church of Saint Anne in November 2010.

2. Marginal Assimilations

The question of religion in contemporary state discourse across the globe has become dominant enough to be described as a return of religion. In France as well as in Britain, it is partly coated with 'Islamophobia' or 'Arabophobia'.[437] This has become explicit since the terrorist attacks of 2001 in New York and the bombings of 2004 and 2005 in Madrid and London respectively. But the discursive trend has been steadily growing since the previous decades in most European societies.[438] In islamophobic discourses in post-colonial centres such as France and Britain (we could also refer to the Netherlands or Spain), the role of religion replaces the traditional role played by anti-Semitism.[439] These countries, contrary to Poland, are immigration countries and the question of immigration has concurrently become part of the dominant political and social issues in the post-Cold war world.

As we mentioned before, the strict secularism of the French state (*laicité*) has been institutionalised since 1905, and although regularly debated,[440] it prevents in theory any form of ostentatious display of religion, especially from state officials. French President, Nicolas Sarkozy, who has been the herald of the theme of 'national identity' since the presidential campaign of 2007, has also become the first president

437 As Balibar notes, there is a "systematic confusion of 'Arabness' and 'Islamicism'." "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?" p. 24 For a study which presents how the Muslim minority, contrary to the dominant discourse, is culturally well integrated in French society, see Jonathan Laurence and Justin Vaisse, *Integrating Islam: Political and Religious Challenges in Contemporary France*, Washington, Brookings Institution Press, 2006.

438 E.g. Thomas Deltombe, *L'islam imaginaire. La construction médiatique de l'islamophobie en France, 1975 - 2005*, Paris, La Découverte, 2005.

439 Balibar, "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?" p. 24. This nevertheless does not mean the disappearance of anti-Semitisim, but only its reduction or its reframing as a less dominant discursive formation.

440 One of the major debates since the 1990s has been the controversy about the wearing of the hijab in public institutions, such as schools. The "anti-scarf" discourses in the debate were often representative of the confusion of Islamicism with Arabness Balibar mentions. For a critical inquiry, see: Pierre Tevanian, *Le voile médiatique. Un faux débat: "l'affaire du foulard islamique"*, Raisons d'agir, 2005.

to have breached the rule of secularism expected from someone in his position.[441] The relationship Sarkozy establishes between religion and culture contributes to the generally culturalist promotion of national identity. Before his election as President, when he was a state minister and president of the major right-wing party, the Union for a Popular Movement (*Union pour un mouvement populaire*, UMP), Sarkozy published a book entitled *Le République, les religions, l'espoir* (The Republic, religions, hope), in which he expresses with little inhibition, his ideological take on these topics. Conversely, this formal ideology constitutes the basis for his culturalist promotion of the French national identity:

> "Je note que les juifs non pratiquants sont souvent présents dans les synagogues pour Kippour, que les musulmans non pratiquants considèrent que l'islam fait également partie de leur identité. Pourquoi ? Parce que nombre d'entre eux se sentent juifs ou musulmans dans le regard de l'autre. Le reniement ou l'indifférence à l'endroit d'un engagement religieux revient presque à se désolidariser d'une communauté de naissance, comme si on abandonnait un héritage, une facette de sa vie"[442]

This passage reads of the particularistic or 'ethnicist' underpinnings of Sarkozy's vision of culture. The concept of "community of birth" echoes the essentialist concepts of the ultra-traditionalists on the far right of the political spectrum, although it is certainly also, if not more directly, inspired by American neo-

441 The signing of the cross by the President on several occasions during official visits in 2007 and 2010 at the Vatican, created a controversy without actual consequences. On the latest presidential visit and reactions by French politicians, see "La visite de Sarkozy au Vatican et ses signes de croix font des vagues", AFP, LePoint.fr, 10.10.2010.

442 "I notice that non-practising Jews often attend synagogues for [Yom] Kippur , that non-practising Muslims consider Islam to be part of their identity. Why? Because most of them feel Jewish or Muslim in other people's opinion. The denial or indifference towards a religious commitment nearly amounts to dissociating oneself from a community of birth, as if one abandoned a heritage, a facet of one's life." Nicolas Sarkozy, *La République, les religions, l'espérance*, Paris, Éditions du Cerf, 2004, p. 21. For a critical overview of the book, see Richard Monvoisin, "Le Sarkozy sans peine. Vol. 1 : la république, les religions, l'espérance", <http://vigilance-laique.over-blog.com/ext/http://infokiosques.net/imprimersans2.php3?id_article=295>, [last accessed 30.07.2010].

conservatism.[443] This ideological expression of ethnic communitarianism sheds a new light on the displays of religiosity by Sarkozy during his presidency. His faith – however true – becomes utilised as a set of signs expressing a 'feeling' towards the religious community which is stronger than the political function. These signs are also without doubt, in the political play for issue ownership, part of a political spectacle directed to voters for whom the Christian religion is a fundamental value. The passage further suggests that the French Republic is essentially of the Christian cultural stock, which the remainder of the book confirms, and that in return, the Jewish and Muslim communities are not part of this primordial essence.

Sarkozy's further utilisation of cultural themes was made even more explicit during the presidential campaign of 2007. In the campaign programme, entitled *Mon Projet: Ensemble tout devient possible* (My project: together, everything is possible), the double standards of Sarkozy regarding secularism are hidden behind appropriate formulas: “la laicité, l'égalité entre la femme et l'homme et la liberté de conscience sont des principes avec lesquels je ne transigerai jamais.”[444] Putting all of these formal elements in relation with Sarkozy's systematic stigmatisation of Muslims “who bleed sheep in their bathtub” (in reference to an obsolete practice during the traditional religious holiday Eid al-Adha), it becomes plain to whom the strictness of Republican standards apply.[445]

The last point of Sarkozy's programme was entitled “Fiers d'être français” (Proud to be French, in the plural) in which Sarkozy, after having presented his plan to control immigration, states:

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443 On the culturalist turn in far-right nationalist discourse in France, see Ruth Amossy, “ The National Front against the 'Off-the-peg thinking' of anti-racist groups, or: an examination of the proper use of accepted ideas in the new xenophobic debates”, Teresa Walas [ed.], *Stereotypes and Nations*, Cracow, International Cultural Centre, 1995, pp. 303-315. On neoconservatism and religion, see Mark Gerson: *The Neoconservative Vision: From the Cold War to the Culture Wars*, London, Madison Books, 1996, esp. pp. 284-292.

444 “*laicité*, equality between man and woman, and freedom of conscience are principles I shall uphold always.”Nicolas Sarkozy, “Mon projet: Ensemble tout deviant possible”, p. 15, http://www.sarkozy.fr/lafrance/ [retrieved 24.11.2007]

445 Declared in the early stages of the presidential campaign, during a talk show on the main private TV channel in France. Sarkozy, *J'ai une question à vous poser* , TV talk show, TF1, 05.02.2007.

> "C'est finalement sans doute le pire de nos renoncements que d'avoir cessé d'être fier d'être français. Notre fierté repose d'abord sur l'identité de notre nation. Nous incarnons l'idéal national, parce que justement notre pays est constitué d'une multitude de peuples, de régions, de traditions et de cultures locales, depuis la métropole jusqu'à l'Outre-mer, enrichie par les vagues successives d'immigration, fédérée autour d'une ambition et d'une foi commune: être un grand pays, uni par les droits de l'homme et nos valeurs républicaines. Si je suis élu, je ne cesserai d'affirmer la fierté d'être français."[446]

The worn out reference to the richness of immigration certainly sounds once more appropriate, although partly dictated by common sense and partly by political correctness. It could even have sounded earnest had not Sarkozy deprived it of its meaning so often, as is even the case on the same page of his campaign programme. The suggestive religious vocabulary adds to the potential significations of Sarkozy's political statement, cloaked in dreams of grandeur which echo the long gone imperial glory and an attempt to reformulate the 'civilising mission' of the West.[447]

Despite all the eloquence, Sarkozy's policy was already established in the eyes of the public as intransigent and pro-active. In the years preceding the 2007 presidential election, Sarkozy made a name for himself as a man of action as Interior minister

446 "Finally, our worst denial has without doubt been us ceasing to be proud of being French. Our pride rests primarily on the identity of our nation. We are the incarnation of the national ideal, precisely because our country is constituted of a multitude of peoples, of regions and local traditions and cultures, from the *Métropole* to the oversea territories, enriched by successive waves of immigration, federated around common ambition and faith: to be a great country, united by human rights and our republican values. If I am elected, I will not cease to affirm the pride of being French." Sarkozy, "Mon projet", p. 15.

447 To further make the imperialist reference in Sarkozy's discourse explicit, one can refer to Sarkozy's speech at Dakar University on 29.07.2007 which sparked a controversy across the African continent as well as in Europe. In a mixture of shameless defence of the European colonial heritage in Africa and a paternalistic imprecations on Africa's essence and path to the future, he declared among other things: "Le drame de l'Afrique, c'est que l'homme africain n'est pas assez entré dans l'histoire." (The drama of Africa is that the African man has not entered history enough). The theme of the civilising mission (or civilisatory mission) had more generally been resurging in political discourse since the mid 1990s. See Dino Costantini, Juliette Ferdinand [eds.], *Mission civilisatrice: le rôle de l'histoire coloniale dans la construction de l'identité politique française*, Paris, Editions la Découverte, 2008, p. 290.

during President Jacques Chirac's second term (2002-2007).[448] His policy had plain overtones of law and order and imposed a results-oriented culture (*culture du résultat*) on the police forces.[449]

This tour of the formal expressions of Sarkozy's ideology amounts to a series of ambivalent discursive practices. These formulations often bring socio-cultural risk motives in relation to immigration to the front.[450] At the same time, as we can already observe in the passage from the campaign programme, Sarkozy repeatedly aligns his approach to the tradition of French civic nationalist discourse formulated by Renan, stressing the will behind the national project. Shortly before the official start of the presidential campaign, he was already declaring on national television: "La France est une volonté, ce n'est pas un hasard." (France is an act of will, it is not an accident).[451]

The general ambivalence or permeations of Sarkozy's discourse on culture, national identity and immigration tends to be confusing. Regardless of the political objectives, the effect is the promotion of a 'totalising' (in the sense of all-encompassing) and yet traditionalist national imaginary. In comparison to the reaction of the major candidate of the social-democratic opposition (*Parti Socialiste, PS*), Ségolène Royal, whose focus on the question of national identity were the symbols of the Republic and the theme of diversity,[452] the rallying power of

448 Sarkozy had been Interior Minister on two occasions, a first period (2002-2004) in the government of Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Rafarrin, and later, in the government of Dominique de Villepin (2005-2007). In the fall of 2005, the French "crisis of the housing estates" (*crise des banlieues*), which resulted in the declaring of a state of emergency, was set in the rising climate of securatisation, and in turn, fuelled the further evolution of state policies in this direction. See Mehdi Bhelhaj Kacem, *La psychose française. Les banlieues: le ban de le République*, Paris, Editions Gallimard, 2006; William J. Horobin, "Figuring the *banlieues*: contemporary political discourse in France", MA thesis, Modern Languages and Critical Theory, University of Nottingham, 2007.

449 For a critical assessment of Sarkozy's first term as Interior minister, see Laurent Mucchielli, "Le « nouveau management de la sécurité » à l'épreuve :délinquance et activité policière sous le ministère Sarkozy (2002-2007)", *Champ pénal / Penal field, nouvelle revue internationale de criminologie*, Vol. 5, 2008, <http://champpenal.revues.org/3663> [accessed 22.10.2008]

450 See Ulrich Beck, *Risk Society:Towards a New Modernity*, London, Sage, 1992; Petersson, *Stories About Strangers.*

451 Sarkozy, *A vous de juge*r, political talk show (live), France 2, 30.11.2006, www.ina.fr [accessed 06.02.2008].

452 See "Ségolène Royal 'veut réhabiliter le patriotisme du coeur'", *La Croix*, 25.03.2007.

Sarkozy's discourse appears as having been much more effective in electoral terms.[453] Sarkozy's wide ranging symbolic references, to traditions across the political spectrum effected on relegating most of the other political issues to a secondary plan.

On 8 March 2007, on public television, Sarkozy announced his project for creating a "ministry for national identity and immigration".[454] Two days after the official start of Sarkozy's term as president, on 18 May 2007, the then officially named "Ministry for Immigration, Integration, National Identity and Solidary Development" (*Ministère de l'Immigration, de l'Intégration, de l'Identité nationale et du Développement solidaire*) was created. Its first minister, Brice Hortefeux, a longstanding friend and political ally of Sarkozy, would reproduce the promotion of national identity and the stigmatisation of post-colonial immigration.

If we compare Sarkozy's numerous rationales on the need for the control of immigration with the passages from speeches by Hortefeux after the creation of the Ministry for Immigration and National Identity (the short formula used in the media to refer to the ministry in question), we observe a similar reference to French citizens whose origins are the post-colonial immigration of the 1960s onwards to justify the institution and related policies. For instance, the following quote is an explanation by Sarkozy on the need for tighter immigration control shortly before the presidential campaign:

> "Dans les banlieues, nous payons le prix d'une politique de l'immigration qui n'a été ni choisie, ni voulue, ni revendiquée, ni organisée ; mais l'accumulation dans certains quartiers de fils et petit fils d'étrangers à qui on n'a donné ni formation, ni éducation, ni emploi a conduit à de véritables poudrières. J'en tire

453 This should be in part, but not exclusively, linked to the relevance of political issue ownership, which would suggest that issues such as immigration or national identity taken up by right-wing candidates are more believable. It should also be noted that Sarkozy was the first to raise these issues long before the presidential campaign started. This certainly played in his favour on several levels. Ségolène Royal's intervention on these issues appeared as an overdue attempt to counter the right-wing candidate on what were clearly "his" grounds. On issue ownership see: Patrick Egan, "Issue Ownership and Representation", Working Paper, Institute of Governmental Studies, University of Berkeley, 2006, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/54b3d7zh> [accessed 04.09.2009].

454 Ludovic Blecher, "Sarkozy veut un ministère de l'immigration et de l'identité nationale", *Libération*, 09.03.2007.

> la conclusion qu'il faut maîtriser l'immigration, qu'on ne peut pas accepter tout le monde pour donner la chance de l'intégration à ceux qui ne l'ont pas."[455]

What is surprising is the relation created between what appear as economic problems which are actual problems and the discourse on the failure of the previous immigration and integration policies, which were in part the prerogatives of the Interior minister twice held by Sarkozy at the time of this declaration.[456] The following extract from the press conference given by Brice Hortefeux on the 8 November 2007 takes it a step further:

> "D'abord, osons regarder la vérité en face : le système français d'intégration a échoué. J'en veux pour preuve la concentration beaucoup trop forte de la population d'origine étrangère sur seulement trois régions sur vingt-deux : 60% des étrangers habitent en Ile-de-France, en Rhône-Alpes ou en Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur, parfois dans de véritables ghettos urbains. J'en veux aussi pour preuve le taux de chômage moyen des étrangers, supérieur à 20 %, soit plus du double de la moyenne nationale. Dans certaines banlieues, ce taux atteint les 40%. Il faut donc dire la vérité aux Français : notre système d'intégration n'est plus un modèle. Et pour réussir l'intégration, il faut d'abord maîtriser l'immigration."[457]

455 " In the "banlieues", we are paying the price of an immigration policy that was neither chosen, nor wanted, nor claimed or organized; but the accumulation in certain neighbourhoods of sons and grandsons of foreigners who never had any formation, any education, any job has created real powder magazines. I conclude that one has to control immigration." *A vous de juger*, France 2, 30.11.2006.

456 The laws regarding immigration had already been tightened in 2004 by the Interior Minister at the time, Dominique de Villepin. The new codex came into force in 2005 (Code de l'entrée et du séjour des étrangers et du droit d'asile). In 2003 and 2006, Sarkozy who was then Interior Minister, proposed additional laws which further restricted the rights of immigrants (Loi no. 2003-119 du 26 Novembre 2003 relative à la maitrise de l'immigration, du séjour des étranger et de la nationalité; Loi no. 2006-911 du 24 juillet 2006 relative à l'immigration et à l'intégration) which has been in effect since July 2006, nearly half a year before the quoted declarations on the need for tighter immigration control.

457 "First of all, let us be honest: the French integration system has failed. The proof is the much to high concentration of population of foreign origin in only three regions out of 22: 60% of foreigners live in Ile-de-France, Rhône-Alpes or in PACA, sometimes in real urban ghettos. Another proof is the average unemployment rate of foreigners, above 20%, which is more than twice the national average. In certain "banlieues", this rate reaches to 40%. We have to say the truth to the French people: our integration system is not a model anymore. And to successfully integrate, one has first to control immigration." Brice Hortefeux, Press Conference, 08.11.2007, <http://www.premierministre.gouv.fr/iminidco/salle_presse_832/discours_tribunes_835/discours_brice_hortefeux_presse_57958.html> [accessed 25.06.2008, URL obsolete]

Most of the figures Hortefeux mentions could not be verified by the present author.[458] In addition, their rounded-up numbers suggest an effort to obtain an authoritative effect. Leaving the petty rhetorical devices aside, we observe in both passages just mentioned an ambiguous and confusing discourse regarding "foreigners" and French citizens of foreign origin (*issus de l'immigration* is the usual French phrase) who inhabit the *banlieues*. The terms used in Sarkozy's declaration swing from "banlieues", "sons and grandsons of immigrants" (a turn of phrase which actually refers to French citizens of foreign origin) and "immigration". Hortefeux more plainly associates the "ghettos" with immigration, further directing the signification of who the French people he is addressing are: all of those who do not identify themselves with the association between immigration and the *banlieues*.

These discourses symbolically disintegrate the parts of the French population which can be both recognised as being *issus de l'immigration* and in the *banlieues*. In spite of all the talk of the economic problems faced by the working class in general which inhabits the housing estates, this disintegration from the core of what is signified as Frenchness further marginalises French citizens of foreign origins who already are on the symbolic and social-economic fringes of the French society. Beyond electoral politics and particular policies, these observations confirm the established trends of the appropriation by mainstream politicians of xenophobic and nationalist discourses leading to the promotion of exclusionary discursive practices, with symbolic as well as actual consequences. Balibar already noted:

> "the assimilation demanded of […] a 'Black' in Britain or a '*Beur*' [slang for Arab] in France […] before they can become 'integrated' into the society in which they already live (and which will always be suspected of being superficial, imperfect or simulated) is presented as progress, as an emancipation, a conceding of rights."[459]

458 Most accessible statistics do not present similar methodoligcal terms. The closest we could find was an estimate that one third of immigrants were beneficiaries of social housing, which presents differences with the suburban housing estates since 2000, all municipalities of at least 50,000 inhabitants are legally bound to allocate 20% of available habitations for social housing purposes. On statistics from 1996 see Julien Boëldieu and Suzanne Thave, "Le logement des immigrés en 1996", *Insee Premiere*, no. 730, 2000.

459 Balibar, "Is there a 'Neo-Racism'?", p. 25.

Balibar further explains how in recent racist discourses express "all the ambiguity of the notion of culture", referring to the universalistic or 'open' and particularistic or 'closed' acceptations of the term. As far as nationalist discourses are concerned, they are also based on an inherent ambivalent play between the nation as a political entity and the nation as a cultural entity. Breuilly analyses how the nation is portrayed:

> "at one moment as a cultural community and at another as a political community whilst insisting that in an ideal state the national community will not be 'split' into cultural and political spheres. The nationalist can exploit this perpetual ambiguity. National independence can be portrayed as the freedom of the citizens who make up the (political) nation or as the freedom of the collectivity which makes up the (cultural) nation."[460]

Although the discursive elements presented in the previous pages, in the cases of both Poland and France, are far from being comprehensive and representative of the full range of political discourses, their relationality points towards a constant and fairly efficient discursive play between the various ambiguities of both xenophobic and nationalist discursive formations as well in between these formations. These formal significations point, in their promotion in mainstream political speeches, to an imaginary association between cultural exclusion and national belonging which may induce their further institution or reproduction as socially recognised significations.

3. Historical Alignments

Before articulating the case of mainstream political discourses in Britain on the issue of national identity, we need to overview the themes articulated for the Polish and French cases. Regarding the question of religion and secularism, Britain presents a different development from the two republican state formations of France and Poland. As a constitutional monarchy, the main difference is evidently the survival of the monarchy whose role has progressively become more symbolical or formal than strictly speaking political. The head of state has also remained the head of the Church ever since it was established in the sixteenth century as one of the first steps

460 Breuilly, *Nationalism and the State*, p. 348.

of the Reformation.[461] The diminishing role of the monarch has certainly allowed this official relationship between state and church to continue. It has nonetheless not hindered the development of secularism in political institutions of the state which partly reflects the social evolution of the British population.

Anthony Blair, who served as Prime minister during two consecutive terms between 1997 and 2007 is knowingly a devout catholic but was expected to refrain from blatant displays and promotion of his faith. A year after leaving the office of Prime minister and the world of British national politics, he founded the Tony Blair Faith Foundation which "aims to promote respect and understanding about the world's major religions and show how faith is a powerful force for good in the modern world."[462] Regardless of Blair's personal convictions, such a foundation would have been unimaginable were he still serving as the British Prime minister:

> "Indeed, after spending much of his decade in Downing Street fighting shy of discussing his deep Christian convictions for fear of alienating Britain's largely secular society, he is now free of such constraints"[463]

Gordon Brown, Blair's successor as Prime minister, appears as less pious than his predecessor despite a number of general references to religion in his political speeches.[464] Where Brown distinguishes himself more consistently from Blair is on his overt promotion of a national British identity which he already heralded as

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461 See Chapter 3, Part 1.1 of the present work.

462 *The Tony Blair Faith Foundation* website, <http://www.tonyblairfaithfoundation.org/pages/about-us>, [accessed 20.01.2010]

463 Tom Baldwin, "Tony Blair's Faith Foundation to sell religion as force for good", *The Times*, 30.05.2008. There is one declaration of faith Blair made during his term which is worth taking note of. Although there is no direct reference to Christianity, Blair replied on an ITV1 talk show in 2006 that he prayed to God to help him decide to go to war in Iraq. These declarations were met with criticism, which nevertheless were of little consequence. What is significant is how it establishes, in similar vein as with Sarkozy, a connection with American neo-conservative politicians, and more particularly with George W. Bush with whom Blair went to war. On the declarations and reactions see "Blair 'prayed to God' over Iraq", BBC News website, 03.03.2006, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/politics/4772142.stm> [accessed 20.01.2010].

464 See e.g. James Chapman, "Brown DOES do God as he calls for new world order in sermon at St Paul's", The Daily Mail, 01.04.2009, <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-1166182/Brown-DOES-God-calls-new-world-order-sermon-St-Pauls.html> [accessed 22.01.2010]

Chancellor of the Exchequer under Blair's government.[465] While Brown's speeches are generally more poised and less spectacular than those of Sarkozy or Hortefeux, we observe the same discursive practice. In both cases, immigration and national identity, sometimes termed citizenship in the British examples, the politicians state the lack of national identity and the failures of their respective models of integration.

To the "denial of the pride of being French" stated by Sarkozy, Brown declares that Britishness should not "leave a hole" and that action should be taken in this respect.[466] As far as it could be traced in his political speeches, Brown repeatedly declared the need for the United Kingdom to rediscover its Britishness. Delivering the British Council annual lecture on 7 July 2004, Brown spoke of a "belief" that urged him to continuously try to instil new life into Britishness:

> "I believe that just about every central question about our national future […] can only be fully answered if we are clear about what we value about being British and what gives us purpose and direction as a country. […] And I want to suggest that our success as Great Britain […] depends upon us rediscovering from our history the shared values that bind us together and on us becoming more explicit about what we stand for as a nation."[467]

The clarification of the values of Britishness implies it is not clear, which further confirms the problematic lack of a national identity in Brown's formal ideology.

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465 Gordon Brown was Chancellor of the Exchequer in Anthony Blair's governments from 1997 until 2007, before becoming leader of the Labour Party (24.06.2007) and as a consequence Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland since 27.06.2007. For an insight into Anthony Blair's position on the question of "Britishness" and the differences with Gordon Brown's, see e.g. Keith Dixon, "Blair, Brown and Britishness: the end of an old song?" conference paper, 2007, <http://www.raisonsdagir.org /kd7.pdf> [retrieved 17.02.2008].

466 Britishness is precisely defined as national identity: "[…] a Britishness which welcomes differences, but which is not so loose, so nebulous that it is simply defined as the toleration of difference and leaves a hole where national identity should be." Gordon Brown, "The future of Britishness", speech at the Fabian society, 14.01.2006, <http://www.fabian-society.org.uk>/ [accessed 10.01.2008].

467 Brown "Speech at the British Council annual lecture, July 7 2004", <www.guardian.co.uk/ politics/2004/jul/08/uk.labour1> [accessed 10.04.2008] In 2007, Jack Straw, then Leader of the House of Commons, would reproduce the same discourse as Brown in the political campaign for promoting the government's citizenship policies: ""We have to be clearer about what it means to be British, what it means to be part of this British nation of nations and, crucially, to be resolute in making the point that what comes with that is a set of values. Yes, there is room for multiple and different identities, but those have to be accepted alongside an agreement that none of these identities can take precedence over the core democratic values of freedom, fairness, tolerance and plurality that define what it means to be British." *The Times*, 26.01.2007.

Similar statements where made by Sarkozy, like for instance in his campaign video clip on national identity:

> "If no one explains what France is to newcomers, to people who want to become French, how can we integrate them? The French integration model has failed because we have forgotten to talk about France. I do not want to forget [talking] about France, because France is at the core of my project."[468]

We observe here another element which is crucial in opening up the imaginary space for promoting new senses to be instituted within this space for national identity. In the passage taken from Hortefeux's press conference, we read "We have to say the truth to the French people: our integration system is not a model anymore. And to successfully integrate, one has first to control immigration." In Brown's approach to the question, immigration and British citizens of foreign origins are less of a focus than in the speeches of French politicians. More precisely, they are not the only problems which Britishness is faced with. Brown in fact attempts, as is often the case for mainstream British politicians, to have more consensual approach to immigration in general as a positive element for the economy but he is also more attentive to the diversity of Britishness.[469] When Sarkozy dramatically talks of the "failure of the French integration system", Brown more diplomatically casts a doubt on how effective "the balance between integration and multiculturalism" is, or in a later formulation: "[w]hat was wrong about multiculturalism was not the recognition of diversity but that it over-emphasised separateness at the cost of unity."[470] Moving partly away from questions of integration, the forces that undermine the Union are to be found in the 'counter' regional nationalisms of this 'nation of nations':

> "Perhaps in the past we could get by with a Britishness that was assumed without being explicitly stated. But when our country is being challenged in

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468 Sarkozy, "National Identity" Campaign video, 2006. For a full transcript in French, see Annex 8.

469 Part of the reason for such a promotion of "diversity through unity" is certainly to be found in the terrorist bombings of 2005. The citizenship curriculum promoted by Alan Johnson, the Education Secretary in 2007, who initiated a curriculum review entitled *Identity and Diversity: Living Together in the UK*, (Keith Ajegbo, Dina Kiwan, Seema Sharma, Nottingham, DfES Publication, 2007) is representative of the policies aimed at countering home-bread terrorism. Announcing compulsory lessons in British history, including "Black and Asian history", the review reads as a textbook example of civic nationalist discourse.

470 Respectively, Brown, "The future of Britishness" and "We need a United Kindgom", *The Daily Telegraph*, 13.01.2007.

> Scotland, Wales and now England by secessionists, it is right to be explicit about what we, the British people, share in common and the patriotic vision for our country's future."[471]

At first glance, Brown's promotion of nationalism appears explicitly civic albeit clouded in a very traditional rhetoric.[472] Looking at the elements with which Brown proposes to fill in the space opened by the lack of national identity, they appear indeed as very traditional. Brown, certainly influenced by his higher education in history, heavily relies on key political events in what is presented as the "golden thread" of British history which, as Brown states, have "woven together [...] "our central beliefs [which] are a commitment to – liberty for all, responsibility by all and fairness to all."[473]

On the the key political events, Brown continues:

> ""[…] there is […] a golden thread which runs through British history – that runs from that long ago day in Runnymede in 1215; on to the Bill of Rights in 1689 where Britain became the first country to successfully assert the power of Parliament over the King; to not just one, but four great Reform Acts in less than a hundred years – of the individual standing firm against tyranny and then – an even more generous, expansive view of liberty – the idea of government accountable to the people, evolving into the exciting idea of empowering citizens to control their own lives. […] Of course the appeal to fairness runs through British history, from early opposition to the first poll tax in 1318 to the second; fairness the theme from the civil war debates [...] to the 1940s when Orwell talked of a Britain known to the world for its 'decency'."[474]

All of these events refer to obviously significant events. But the British history exposed by Brown remains traditionally nationalistic on two grounds. First, they are all extracted from their historical contexts. The linearity thus created not only removes the transcultural density behind the events, but more importantly sets relevant British history primarily as the history of England. So when Brown talks anachronistically about Britain in 1689, it is either a surprising mistake coming from

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471 Brown, "We need a United Kindgom".

472 In Brown, "The future of Britishness", for example: "[our] shared civic values which are not only the ties that bind us, but also give us a patriotic purpose as a nation and sense of direction and destiny."

473 Brown, "The future of Britishness". Most passages quoted from "The future of Britishness" appear in nearly the exact same form in Brown's "Speech at the British Council annual lecture, July 7 2004".

474 Brown, "The future of Britishness".

a historian or a purposeful twist. Secondly and consistently this time, Brown makes no references to the struggles against English hegemony on the British Isles, or any mention of the actual reasons behind the diversity of contemporary British society.[475] The historical linearity excludes thus all the formation of the British Empire and its unifying "tyranny" at home as well as overseas.

The failed attempt at institutionalising his promotion of national identity confirms this traditionalist approach which aims at emulating the national institutions such as the one found in France or Poland (and in fact across the globe). On 5 October 2007, in the early stages of Brown's premiership, the government launched a review on citizenship in Britain. The report, *Citizenship: Our Common Bond* was eventually presented to Brown by Lord Goldsmith in March 2008.[476] It is particularly significant as it contains proposals for "enhancing the bond of citizenship" – a national day for instance – which for most were previously mentioned by Brown when promoting the "rediscovering" of British identity.[477]

Beyond the formal and contextual differences, what is observable in terms of the promotion of nationalism in contemporary political discourses in the three cases which we have tried to unwind in this chapter is that the discursive practices related to nationalism lead to the same conclusion. They are all based on hegemonic discursive processes which were already made apparent in our analysis of Sieyès's pamphlet in the previous chapter. They generally involve the opening of spaces for the projected institutionalisation of social significations. The combination or play on the ambivalences inherent to the discursive formation of nationalism creates significant senses which are often supported by social or political institutions. In all

475 The only mention to the diverse origins of members of the British society in "The future of Britishness" was: " we have always been a country of different nations and thus of plural identities – a Welshman can be Welsh and British, just as a Cornishman or woman is Cornish, English and British – and may be Muslim, Pakistani or Afro-Carribean, Cornish, English and British."

476 Lord Q.C. Goldsmith, *Citizenship: Our Common Bond*, 2008, p. 88, <http://www.justice.gov.uk /reviews/citizenship.htm> [accessed 03.04.2008].

477 Brown, "The future of Britishness"; "We need a United Kindgom"; "We must defend the Union", *The Daily Telegraph*, 25.03.2008. Faced with increasing unpopularity, the policies were not instituted nor appear to have been taken up by the following coalition government since 2010.

cases, regardless of the combination of themes, the promoted senses hint at exclusionary social significations.

In more details, what we have observed is that in the case the Polish traditionalist discourses, the focus on the catholic faith as essential to Polishness excludes an imaginary that could interpret the history of the Polish peoples which would include their long-standing social-historical complexity, notably regarding the historical minorities. This exclusionary focus suggests a linear and narrow reading of history as it appears in Brown's account of British history, even if his focus is of a more political nature. The centrality of England in Brown's promotion suggests a generally uncritical appraisal of the role of the Empire in the construction of contemporary British society (without mentioning its global effects). This recentralising on the high culture of the state is finally clear in the opposition between the idealised and homogenised French identity and stigmatised immigration populations, which in speeches of the politicians in power in France, even tend to exclude actual French citizens as being part of a 'Frenchness' defined through their exclusion.

– Part 2 –
Deviations and Reproductions

1. Appropriations of Extremism

It has been previously suggested that the exclusionary significations promoted in discourses on national identity by mainstream political figures is supported by their appropriation of far-right rhetoric. The coalition governments of 2006-2007 of Kazimierz Marcinkiewicz and Jarosław Kaczyński (the twin brother of the former president) of extreme parties (such as the ultra-catholic LPR) and the mainstream PiS may appear as a short term glitch, but it is certainly representative of political and symbolic associations between mainstream and extreme formations. Roman Giertych, co-founder of the LPR in 2001, served as minister for national education in both governments. The series of controversies sparked from the outset of his nominations reached beyond the scale of national politics.[478] These did not prevent Jarosław Kaczyński from maintaining Giertych as minister of national education. The sole fact of having assigned Giertych to this particular ministry speaks for itself.

In France, as was the case in many European countries, playing on people's fear of immigration and general insecurity was originally the prerogative of the far-right and became major political themes in the electoral breakthroughs of the Front National (FN) in the 1980s.[479] By the time of Sarkozy became Interior minister, Jean-Marie Le Pen, founder and president of the FN, had become an established

478 On Giertych's open homophobia after having sacked Mirosław Sielatycki, then director of the Central Agency for the Formation of Teachers (Centralny Ośrodek Doskonalenia Nauczycieli) for having suggested in a book that schools should contact gay organisation to promote open-mindedness, and the reaction of the Council of Europe, see e.g. "Rada Europy przeciw decyzji Giertycha" (The Council of Europe condemns Giertych's decision), *Gazeta Wyborcza*, 14.06.2006. The Ambassador of Israel also reacted in declaring he would refrain from getting in touch with the minister of national education, PAP (Polish Press Agency), 09.07.2006. On the national stage, as early as in May, an open letter to the Prime minister was set up demanding the removal of Giertych from office, see <http://www.bezgiertycha.rp4.pl/> [accessed 04.09.2009].

479 Catherine Fieschi, *Fascism, Populism and the French Republic: In the Shadow of Democracy*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2004, see pp. 11-12.

political figure.[480] Sarkozy would make explicit references to the traditional positions held by the FN, borrowing on several occasions during and after the presidential campaign, formulas which were customary in the speeches of the FN leader. On several occasions, when asked to respond to criticisms suggesting that he was directly referring to the programme of the FN (particularly concerning catchphrases similar to "love or leave France"), Sarkozy systematically answered: "If Le Pen says the sun is yellow, I am not going to argue that it is blue."[481] Yet Sarkozy also manages to maintain ambivalence, usually with less tendentious explanations on the dangers of the far-right, managing even to suggest his populist appropriations as responsible or even necessary answers to the rise of the far-right:

> "[we] are the [democracy] where the extreme right is the strongest and where temptations of racism have in recent years been the most severe and the most dramatic. Maybe this should be reflected upon…"[482]

Brown and his government seem to have come to the same conclusion as Sarkozy and more generally French mainstream politicians: that in order to counter the relatively successful extremist political formations, one needs to appropriate their rhetoric. But this means fighting them on their grounds. This is representative of a general shift to the right which has steadily been taking place since the 1980s, the traditional right-wing formations giving credence to far-right ideologies, and the centre-left formations giving credence to centre-right ideologies as left-wing formations generally appear out of inspiration.[483]

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480 In the presidential elections of 2002, Le Pen reached the second round, losing against Jacques Chirac with 17,79 percent of the vote in what was the greatest success of the far-right in presidential elections. The FN's vote count was above the average in other national elections as well.

481 Sarkozy, TF1, 28.04.2006; TF1, 05.02.2007. An example of Sarkozy's "love it or leave it" slogans date from the 22.04. 2006, during a UMP meeting in Paris: "If there are people who feel embarrassed of being in France, they shouldn't feel embarrassed about leaving it". These relate to a famous motto of the FN "France, love it or leave it" ("La France, aimez-la ou quittez-la") also used by another far-right party (*Mouvement pour la France*), "France, you love it or leave it" ("La France, tu l'aimes ou tu la quittes").

482 Sarkozy, TF1, 28.04.2006.

483 Environmentalist formations do not seem to be very comfortable with the traditional left-wing continuum, although most of them would be regarded as centre-left. For an enlightening alternative representation of political typology replacing the simplistic left-wing right-wing continuum, see *The Political Compass:* <http://www.politicalcompass.org/> [last accessed 05.11.20011]

The 'fronts' Brown faced, compared to the case of Sarkozy, were more numerous and each, one might say, was holding different grounds. On the one hand, the memory of the July 2005 bombings in London, which he portrays in connection to the question of integration,[484] forms the front of the question of immigration and Islam. On the other, the successful electoral campaigns of separatist political parties and their significant gains in the form of devolved parliaments – particularly in Scotland where a referendum on independence after the 2011 elections is on the agenda of the leading party in the Scottish parliament, the SNP – demonstrate that the issue of the break-up of Britain more topical than ever. While Brown is himself a Scotsman, what he calls the "secessionist forces" are portrayed as one major justification for the promotion of a British national identity:

> "Perhaps in the past we could get by with a Britishness that was assumed without being explicitly stated. But when our country is being challenged in Scotland, Wales and now England by secessionists, it is right to be explicit about what we, the British people, share in common and the patriotic vision for our country's future."[485]

Having defined the primary opponents of the Union, Brown is faced with yet another problem: the British National Party's (BNP) traditional ownership of the issue of British national identity. In a similar discursive strategy to Sarkozy's, although with a less extreme rhetoric, Brown refers to the BNP in order to assert that patriotism is not a value that should be left for the extremists to thrive on, but needs to be "[taken] back from the BNP"[486], confirming the initial positioning mentioned before, that national identity has not been asserted enough by mainstream political actors:

> "[…] let us remember that when people on the centre-left recoiled from national symbols, the BNP tried to steal the Union Jack. Instead of the BNP using it as a symbol of racial division, the flag should be a symbol of unity, part of a modern expression of patriotism. So we should respond to the BNP by saying the union flag is a flag for Britain, not for the BNP; all the United

484 Brown, "The future of Britishness"; "We need a United Kingdom".

485 Brown, "We need a United Kingdom".

486 Brown, "We need a United Kingdom".

> Kingdom should honour it, not ignore it; we should assert that the union flag is, by definition, a flag of tolerance and inclusion."[487]

In light of Billig's analysis of banal nationalism and of the historical inquiry of the previous chapter, it becomes obvious that all the positioning by right or left wing majority parties in favour of a renewed promotion of national identity, even when it appears justified by a the lack of social cohesion, means the further banalisation of traditional nationalism. While civil society is certainly put to the test in immigration countries, the global movement of peoples has always been part of human history.[488] In this regard, the traditional paradigm of nationalism which has been organising states and peoples across the globe for the past centuries can hardly be considered successful. Diversity, be it religious or cultural (or sub-cultural) may also seem to put a strain on the cohesion of a given society. Once again, when inspecting the cultural diversity of Europe before the age of nationalism and globalisation, we observe that the number of languages spoken throughout Europe was far greater than the number of actual states or even of regional institutions. Contemporary diversity may prove as surprising.[489] The failure in developing multilingualism as the norm, or rather the impossibility of imagining multilingualism – even in between high culture languages – has been the mark of the dominating nationalist framework developed in Europe. This framework imposed a single language beyond to be used as cultural language and not simply as working language (or *lingua franca*). In

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487 Brown, "The future of Britishness".

488 Reasons, range and frequency have varied. Apart from enforced migration, such as slavery or the post-World War 2 expulsions, a certain number of constants remain. Economic reasons have been and remain the dominant global factor for migration. For the UK, in 2007, 44% of immigration was work-related, 37% in 2008. *Migration Statistics 2008, Annual Report*, Office for National Statistics, OPSI/Crown, 2009, p. 22. Depending on the state's policy, other factors can appear as primary. In France, immigration in relation to family appears as the dominant incentive, while work-related migrants and asylum seekers are significantly less numerous, "Immigration and the 2007 French Presidential Elections", *Immigration Backgrounder*, no. 3, The Migration Policy Institute, 2007, p. 2.

489 In 1999, a report to the Ministry of National Education, Research and Technology and to the Ministry of Culture and Communication established that in accordance with the European Charter on Regional and Minority Languages (1992), the current number of languages spoken on the French territory (including the overseas dominions) is 74 (26 in metropolitan France). Bernard Cerquiglini, "Les langues de France. Rapport Rapport au Ministre de l'Education Nationale, de la Recherche et de la Technologie, et à la Ministre de la Culture et de la Communication", 1999, <http://www.culture.gouv.fr/culture/dglf/lang-reg/rapport_cerquiglini/langues-france.html#ancre156623> [accessed 30.09.2010]

relation to the parliamentary debate about the status of regional languages in France, Jean-Marie Rouart, member of the French Academy (*L'Académie Française*),[490] presents us with the plainest expression of such nationalistic ideology. Without even considering the possibility or fact of multilingualism, he perceives the use of regional languages, which he despises, as a threat to the *essential* superiority of the national language:

> "Les langues régionales, malgré leur charme, leur spécificité et leur importance pour le patrimoine français, ne doivent pas supplanter la langue française. En outre, le terme « langues » pour les idiomes de région me paraît abusif. Il s'agit plutôt de patois, de dialectes. Preuve en est qu'elles n'ont jamais produit de grandes œuvres littéraires, contrairement à la langue française. […] La France est un pays universel, international. Revenir aux dialectes locaux est une absurdité."[491]

We can wonder why the universalism represented by France, as Rouart claims, should be opposed to and fearful of such 'despicable' languages, of which the speakers have no means to establish as national languages *per se* – even if some radicals are perhaps hoping to do so, but it is very unlikely they will succeed.[492] The reasons why speakers of regional languages or dialects have not produced a literature worthy of praise is precisely because of the existence of a *lingua franca*

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490 The aim of the *Académie* is the improvement and standardisation of the French language. Created in 1635, it was suppressed during the French Revolution. Napoleon I restored the institution in 1803 which remains as a token of French linguistic imperialism up to this date.

491 "Regional languages, in spite of their charm, specificity and importance for the French national heritage, should not supplant the French language. In addition, it seems to me that the use of the term of "languages" for regional idioms is excessive. They are rather *patois*, dialects. The proof is that they (sic) have never produced great literary works, contrary to the French language. […] France is a universal, international country. To return to local dialects is absurd." Jean-Marie Rouart, interview, France Soir, 08.05.2008 <http://www.francesoir.fr/actualite/societe/langue-guerre-des-patois-26187.html> [accessed 10.01.2011].

492 Perhaps the case of Ireland could be enlightening in this respect. Although we are not in the presence of a regional language, it proves the point even more so . Irish Gaelic, despite being the first official language and the pro-active policies in favour of establishing it as the main national language since 1922, has remained a secondary language. According to the Central Statistics Office of Ireland, just short of 42% of the population speak Irish (<http://beyond2020.cso.ie/Census/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=75610>, accessed 10.01.2011]. According to the report *The Irish Language and the Irish People*, four fifths of the population support a form of bilingualism. Micheál Mac Gréil, *The Irish Language and the Irish People: Report on the Attitudes towards, Competence in and Use of the Irish Language in the Republic of Ireland in 2007-08*, National University of Ireland Maynooth, 2009, p. 7, <http://www.pobail.ie/en/PressReleases/2009/April/file,9801,en.pdf> [accessed 10.01.2011]

(such as Latin) before the age of nationalism, or of the particularistic high cultures which were inherent in the formation of nation-states.

Consequently, it is maybe necessary to turn our perspective upside down and wonder about the extent to which our nationalism makes us consider migration or diversity as presenting socio-cultural risks before considering the actual problems that arise when people rather than states are faced with both phenomena. It follows that a sense of risk is rather to be found in the culturalist and traditionalist promotions of national identities at a period when economic questions should certainly be put to the fore and alternative means of imagining political and cultural belonging should be explored.

2. Hooliganationalism

As an epiphenomenon of the general reactionary mood which has steadily become dominant in European politics, and presenting us with some of the consequences of enlivening traditionalist nationalist political discourse, the case of the English Defence League (EDL) stands out as an alarming synthesis of the reactionary significations of the contemporary European imaginary. It is the first of a series of Islamophobic organisations based on football hooligan subculture and related to already present Islamophobic organisations, such as the SIOE (Stop the Islamisation of Europe) whose motto reads: "Racism is the lowest form of human stupidity, but Islamophobia is the height of common sense."[493]

The EDL claims it originated as a reaction to the violent protest by radical Islamist group Al-Muhajirun ("The Emigrants" in Arabic) against returning British troops from the Afghan war in March 2009.[494] They present us with yet another facet of the discursive evolution of nationalist and xenophobic discourses since the 1980s

493 SIOE website, <http://sioe.wordpress.com/> [last accessed 20.01.2011]. Most websites of these organisations need to be accessed with a login. For the current inquiry, the present author did not find it necessary to access further information than is provided without website membership. Another website, <http://www.euro-reconquista.com/> lists a number of these clone organisations in its links. We can mention the *Ligue de Defense Française* (French Defence League], Scottish Defence League or the Dutch Defence League. The SIOE for its part has a number of national sites, as well as in Poland, and an American counterpart, the SIOA.

494 Before becoming a national organisation, the name of the group was "The United Peoples of Luton" referring to the city were the Islamist protest took place.

towards their acceptability. Just as the banalisation of national significations entailed the appropriation of extreme nationalist discourses, the banalisation of nationalist significations entails the appropriation of mainstream discursive practices.[495] In the mission statement of the EDL which is openly accessible on their official website, one reads:

> "The English Defence League (EDL) is a *human rights organisation* that was founded in the wake of the shocking actions of a small group of Muslim extremists who, at a homecoming parade in Luton, openly mocked the sacrifices of our service personnel without any fear of censure. Although these actions were certainly those of a minority, we believe that they reflect other forms of religiously-inspired intolerance and barbarity that are thriving amongst certain sections of the Muslim population in Britain: including, but not limited to, the denigration and oppression of women, the molestation of young children, the committing of so-called honour killings, homophobia, anti-Semitism, and continued support for those responsible for terrorist atrocities." (emphasis added)[496]

We can observe here the acceptable discourse which cloaks the otherwise xenophobic and violent demonstrations of the EDL.[497] What we observe is that there are similarities between the array of topics which this "human rights organisation" covers and the themes Sarkozy mentions in his campaign clip on national identity and campaign programme, such the rights of women. But here, instead of the more general values we find in Sarkozy's discourse (equality between men and women), or such as the ones used by Brown (liberty, fairness and equality for all), all the themes are addressed with terms which directly denote violence, and indirectly call for it.

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495 In fact, the latter appropriation pre-dates that of mainstream political discourse. See Amossy, "The National Front against the 'Off-the-peg thinking' of Anti-racist Groups".

496 "Mission Statement", EDL official website, <http://englishdefenceleague.org/content.php?136> [accessed 08.01.2011]

497 See e.g. Robert Booth and Sam Jones, "'Defence league' recruiting football fans to march against Islamic extremism", *The Guardian*, 11.08.2009.

It is maybe surprising also to read that an anti-Islamic organisation seems concerned with such themes as molestation, homophobia or anti-Semitism.[498] But they all contribute to enhance their acceptability. In the process which originated in turning the theme of discrimination on its head, we observe in this particular instance how far-right discourse has evolved to encompass groups whose struggle against discrimination is commonly established. The new leader of the FN, Marine Le Pen, seemed to follow the same route in her first speech as party president. Similarly to the EDL, she claims to be defending the rights of women, gays and Jews against the rampant Islamisation of France and Europe by Muslims who, although it is not formally stated, appear as misogynous, homophobic and anti-Semitic.[499] Without going against the traditional core values of the FN, we can observe how, in a declaration where she categorically expresses her opposition to gay marriage, she turns the struggle against homophobia to her advantage:

> "Je pense que les associations soi-disant représentatives ne sont pas représentatives (des homosexuels) et l'immense majorité des homosexuels réclament non pas le droit à la différence mais le droit à l'indifférence"[500]

Looking back at the mission statement of the EDL, we observe another feature which is characteristic of contemporary far-right political formations, namely their uncritical defence of what is assumed as their natural national identity and

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498 The "the molestation of children" may be misinterpreted. It probably refers to the condemnable practice of excision, associated nowadays with Islam. It is unlikely the EDL is concerned with any other possible meaning behind the expression "the molestation of children". According to Anne Chemin who investigated the situation in France, "Les excisions sont désormais rarement pratiquées sur le sol français, les filles étant excisées lors de séjours temporaires dans le pays d'origine de la famille ou suite à des reconduites ", "50 000 femmes mutilées sexuellement vivent en France" (Nowadays, excisions are rarely practised, *Le Monde*, 25.10.2007. We can assume that the situation is similar in other countries which host Muslim communities. Both national legislations and international bodies such as the World Health Organisation, have enforced strict policies against this practice. In France, perpetrators risk up to 20 years of imprisonment.

499 See Nolwenn Le Blevennec, "La Marine's touch : dix façons de renouveler le danger FN", *Rue89*, 16.01.2011, <http://www.rue89.com/2011/01/16/la-marines-touch-dix-facons-de-renouveler-le-danger-fn-185992> [accessed 16.01.2011].

500 I think that the so-called representative organisations are not representatives (of homosexuals) and the large majority of homosexuals do not call for the right to difference but the right to indifference. "Mariage gay: Le Pen "totalement contre"", AFP, 28.01.2011. <http://www.lefigaro.fr/flash-actu/2011/01/28/97001-20110128FILWWW00371-mariage-gay-marine-le-pen-totalement-contre.php> [accessed 28.01.2011].

contemporary political institutions. This assumption constitutes the main 'acceptable' justification against their crusade against Islam:

> "[Islam] runs counter to all that we hold dear within our British liberal democracy, and it must be prepared to change, to conform to secular, liberal ideals and laws, and to contribute to social harmony, rather than causing divisions."

The statement continues:

> "If people migrate to this country then they should be expected to respect *our culture, its laws, and its traditions*, and not expect their own cultures to be promoted by agencies of the state. The *best of their cultures will be absorbed naturally* and we will all be united by the enhanced culture that results. The onus should always be on *foreign cultures to adapt and integrate*. If said cultures promote anti-democratic ideas and refuse to accept *the authority of our nation's laws*, then the host nation should not be bowing to these ideas in the name of 'cultural sensitivity'. Law enforcement personnel must be able to enforce the rule of law thoroughly without prejudice or fear. Everyone, after all, is supposed to be equal in the eyes of the law." [emphasis added]

It is obvious here what ideological underpinnings are expressed. It is ironic, that in the names of human rights, and claiming to fight the "Jihad", the EDL and affiliated organisations respond by their own crusade. The imagery of the crusades is paramount across the websites of these organisations. In addition to the traditional nationalist football related paraphernalia, the national flags in the form of shields which recall those bore by the medieval crusaders can be found on nearly every single website of any of the national "defence leagues". The finale sentence of the EDL's mission statement sounds indeed as disheartening call to arms: "The time for tolerating intolerance has come to an end: it is time for the whole world to unite against a truly Global Jihad."

The 'holiness' of the medieval crusades has been replaced with one of the foundations of modern societies, namely the rule of law; but the 'infidels' have remained the same. It is significant that in this respect, all these organisations, the defence leagues as well as the SIOE, officially support the state of Israel, which may also first come as a surprise. And yet, through their crusade imagery, one can easily assume how Israel stands for the outpost of the West, replacing the Middle Eastern Christian kingdoms and defending Jerusalem from the "Mohammedans". But these

are mere assumptions, which even if were proven true, would make the discourses of organisations such as EDL and akin conspirational ideologues of 'Eurabia', even less admissible.[501]

In relation to Brown's predicament, we observe that the English nationalist front appears in fact much more radical than the "secessionist forces" of Wales and Scotland for whom the contemporary means of negotiating their nationalist significations have been channelled into the political process known as devolution which can be dated back to the struggles for home rule in Ireland.[502] In this process the traditional separatist and nationalist political groups, such as the SNP in Scotland and Plaid Cymru in Wales and their supporters, have little in common with the far-right crusaders of the EDL or even the BNP for that matter. As Vernon Bogdanor notes:

> "Many of the supporters of the nationalist parties indeed have sought not separation, but the humanization of the state through a reduction in the scale of government."[503]

The political programmes of these nationalist parties also reflect such mainstream preoccupations, as they "are now more left wing, in political rhetoric but also now in government practice, than their Labour adversaries."[504] It is questionable whether Brown's traditionalist promotion of a British national identity has a direct influence on the ideology of organisations such as the EDL, and the actual extent to which such a promotion is indeed counterproductive is hard to assess. The nebulae of

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501 The term Eurabia is a politically laden neologism coined by Bat Ye'or (pseudonym of Giselle Littman, meaning "daughter of the Nile" in Hebrew) which defines a Europe that has capitulated in the face of Islam. It was made popular with her book, *Eurabia: The Euro-Arab Axis*, Fairleigh Dickinson University Press, Madison, 2005. Since 1983, she has been elaborating her ideology around the notion of *dhimma* which historically refers to non-Muslim people living under Sharia law. She applies this condition to the European societies in a paranoid contribution to the more widely popular idea of the clash of civilisation. It is significant that the expression, before it was adapted by Samuel Huntington in "The Clash of Civilisations?" (*Foreign Affairs*, 1993), was originally coined by Bernard Lewis in essay "The Roots of Muslim Rage", *The Atlantic Monthly*, September 1990. Already in 1976, Lewis had formulated what would form the basis of the dominant discourse on the incompatibility of Islam and the West: "The Return of Islam", *Commentary Magazine*, January 1976.

502 Vernon Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1999, p. 2.

503 Bogdanor, *Devolution in the United Kingdom*, p. 297.

504 Keith Dixon, "Blair, Brown and Britishness: the end of an old song?".

identity politics which contributes to promoting traditional significations and the centrality of England, may indeed render discourses such as the EDL's more acceptable.

3. Transnationalist Power Metal

It is significant also that the EDL, contrary to traditional far-right parties, is adamant about clarifying its position as anti-Nazi.[505] In October 2009, it called a press conference in a derelict warehouse in Luton to stage the burning of a Nazi flag. As BBC journalist Paraic O'Brien reports:

> "The windows of the warehouse had been boarded up. Fifteen men in balaclavas unfurled a swastika flag and proceeded to try to set it alight for the cameras. The message - look we are not Nazis."[506]

This sort of positioning is certainly different from the usually less spectacular and more ambiguous positioning of far-right political parties and organisation vis à vis national-socialism.[507] But in the generalised process of the banalisation of far-right ideologies – and in the case of the EDL, its support for the state of Israel and cooperation with Jewish extremists –, these new procedures appear as part of a rhetoric of the new reactionary imaginary. The grid of significations it points to is that the opposition to national-socialism is no longer a safeguard for extremist ideologies, which is a dramatic evolution in the contemporary imaginary. One could argue that it is related to the evolution of the memory of the horrors of the Nazi regime, which is slowly passing from living memory to memory-history.

Moving away from political organisations and far-right ideologies, a successful hard rock music band, or for the connoisseurs, a power metal band, presents us with a

505 The EDL has a "Jewish division" and in early January 2011 staged a common demonstration in Toronto with the Canadian branch of the extremist Jewish Defence League. On the Jewish division see Julian Kossoff, "The English Defence League, the Jewish division and the useful idiots", Telegraph.co.uk, 19.01.2010, <http://blogs.telegraph.co.uk/news/juliankossoff/100059179/the-english-defence-league-the-jewish-division-and-the-useful-idiots/> [accessed 27.01.2011]

506 Paraic O'Brien "Under the skin of English Defence League", BBC Newsnight, 12.10.2009, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/8303786.stm> [accessed 22.02.2009]

507 Usually under the form of historical revisionism or even denial of the Holocaust.

peculiar recipe for success.[508] The Swedish band *Sabaton*, the name referring to a piece of medieval armour, was founded in 1999. As most power metal bands, its music is a mix of catchy pop-like melodies played in fast tempos with a heavy metal sound. The main effect such music aims at producing is an epic feeling which is reflected in the traditional themes of the lyrics. It is not a genre usually associated with any sort of political engagement. Its imagery and rhetoric are generally those of heroic fantasy.[509] In this regard, Sabaton started off as an ordinary power metal band. With the release of their second album, *Primo Victoria* (Abyss Studios, 2005), the band started gaining in popularity with its surprising and original theme of historical battles. A review of their fifth album, *The Art of War* (Black Lodge Records, 2008), which was their greatest success, summarizes Sabaton's particularity:

> "Power Metal lyrics often are equated with fantastic battles, dragons, knights and unicorns and while battles also play an integral part of Sabaton's lyrics, they are far from being fantastic, quite the contrary, they are taking on the realities of historic wars, such as World War II, but thankfully without glorifying wars, rather pointing out the hardships and consequences, if you really listen to the lyrics and actually let them sink in, comprehending what the soldiers had to go through back then, it can actually be a pretty chilling experience."[510]

Both the aforementioned albums feature for the most part, songs whose lyrics are inspired by historical military events, such as D-Day ("Primo Victoria"), the battle of Stalingrad ("Stalingrad") or the Operation "Iraqi Freedom" ("Panzer Division").[511] On the album *The Art of War*, the song entitled "40:1" (forty to one) refers to the World War II battle of Wizna which opposed the Polish army to the invading Werhmarcht between 7 and 10 September 2010. In an interview, the lead singer recalls a letter he received from a Polish fan a letter relating the

508 In 2009, Sabaton was nominated in the category of "Best Heavy Metal band" (Bästa Hårdrock) for the Grammis, the Swedish equivalent of the Grammy Awards. The award is considered as one the most important on the metal scene in Europe. They lost to another Swedish metal band, In Flames, which is most certainly one of the most popular metal bands of the 2000s.

509 One of first metal bands and certainly one of the most famous of the genre is the German band Helloween which was founded in 1978.

510 Sabaton Review, *The Metal Observer*, 26.05.2008, <http://www.metal-observer.com/articles.php?lid=1&sid=1&id=14388> [accessed 15.09.2010]

511 All the three featured on the album *Primo Victoria*.

"extraordinary" deeds of the Polish soldiers at the battle of Wizna.[512] This account inspired the band to write a song which has considerably bolstered their popularity in Poland. In reaction to this tribute, the Polish government granted them honorific citizenship and a live performance was set up on the seventieth anniversary of the battle on its original grounds.[513] In 2008, the association "Wizna1939" was created in the locality of Wizna which has been promoting the mythical battle ever since, even publishing a short comic book on the battle directly inspired by the song "40:1".[514] The official video clip of the song features a live performance of the band cut with fictional footage representing the battle of Wizna. The Polish flag is extensively present throughout the video: three or four are set on the stage, a couple of others are being waved by the public and the fictional flashbacks feature three shots of a floating Polish flag. On many occasions the lead singer weaves the Polish national flag on which "Polish Panzer Division" is written in black capital letters.

Without even taking the lyrics into account, we already observe an overt promotion of nationalist symbolism, in which the reference to the German tank adds to the uneasiness of the imagery. But their seemingly explicit anti-Nazi lyrics at the same time allows for nationalistic expressions which recall the most militarist of nationalisms.[515] But the association of a German military term with the Polish flag by a group of musicians dressed in military clothing suggest a more general fascination with militarism which appears as more ambiguous than their lyrics. This fascination is explicit in the chorus on the song "40:1", which reads as follows:

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512 Anna Nowacka-Isaksson. "Składamy hołd bohaterom [We pay tribute to heroes]", *Rzeczpospolita*, 14.06.2008.

513 Sabaton official website, <http://www.sabaton.net/band.html> [accessed 21.10.2010].

514 Rafał Roskowiński, *Wizna 1939, 40 1: Art of War*, R&R, 2008. See the association's official website: <http://www.wizna1939.eu/o_stowarzyszeniu.php> [accessed 21.10.2010]. On the official website of the Polish Army, we learn that the comic book was presented to the Army on the same day as the launch of the official video clip of the song by Sabaton on 22 February 2008. The comic book can be downloaded free of charge on the Polish Army's website: <http://www.wojsko-polskie.pl/articles/view/13197/59/komiks-wizna-1939.html> [retrieved 25.10.2010]

515 Sabaton had previously produced a similarly glorifying song on their album *Primo Victoria*, entitled "Counterstrike" whose theme was the Six-Day War of 1967. The official video clip featured in a similar fashion an extensive use of national symbols of Israel.

"No army may enter that land
That is protected by Polish hand
Unless you are 40 to 1
Your force will soon be undone

Baptised in fire
40 to 1
Spirit of Spartans
Death and glory
Soldiers of Poland
Second to none
Wrath of the Wehrmarcht brought to a halt"[516]

The epic tone praising the valour of Polish soldiers is here well in line with what is expected from a power metal song. The Spartan reference is directly taken from Polish national military folklore in which the battle of Wizna has been coined, along with a few other battles, the "Polish Thermopylae".[517] Indeed the generally estimated ratio of forces was about 700 Polish soldiers against more than 42,000 German soldiers. The Polish soldiers are said to have gloriously defended their position for four consecutive days and all would have perished in the process. The commander of the Polish forces, Captain Władysław Raginis, is said to have blown himself up with a hand grenade before losing the last bunker.[518]

But according to historian Tomasz Wesołowski who specialises in twentieth century Polish military history, this popular romantic account is a myth.[519] The battle would have taken place on 9 September, opposing fewer Polish soldiers, but with better equipment than is usually recounted, against 4,000 German troops, as the rest of the

516 For the complete lyrics, see Annex 9.

517 See e.g. in the journal of the veterans of the Polish Army: A. Wiktorzak, "Wizna - Polskie Termopile" [Wizna – The Polish Thermopylae], *Głos Weterana*, no. 9, 1997.

518 This account is widespread across the World Wide Web. For example, the articles in the various languages on the battle of Wizna on the Wikipedia website all tell the same story, based on the article in Polish.

519 Tomasz Wesołowski appears to be in the process of writing a book about the original battle taking into account the only remaining military sources of the time, i.e. those of the Wehrmarcht, which according to him, provide a different picture than that of the contemporary popular representation of Wizna as the Polish Thermopylae. He has announced that his book would also cover the memory of the battle of Wizna in the decades after the war and its appropriation by the national-communist regime in the 1960s onwards where the contemporary myth originates. Tomasz Wesołowski, interview by Monika Żmijewska, "Wizna: niesłychany mit kampanii wrześniowej?" [Wizna: the incredible myth of the September campaign?], *Gazeta Wyborcza Białystok*, 06.09.2009.

column waited behind. The position seemed to have been abandoned, as there is little evidence accounting for the death of the large majority of Polish soldiers.

Wesołowski presents how the myth was created by the local director of the military museum twenty years after the actual events in a manner typical of the propaganda of the PRL regime. There is a historical irony in the fact that the myth of the battle of Wizna whose origins are to be found in national-communist propaganda has become once again a symbol of Polish resistance thanks to a song by a Swedish power metal band: transnational reproduction of nationalism in the making.[520] Wesołowski, who was born sometime in the late 1960s, adds that this myth was part of his upbringing. In response to those who would attack him for historical revisionism, he answers that his work does not undermine the heroism of the Polish Army in 1939, but that the contemporary national myths surrounding this period are still myths of pre-1989 Polish national-communism. He states that other battles and other Polish officers would have been worthy of remembrance:

> "Na zafałszowanym micie nie można budować własnej tożsamości. Po co na siłę fetować obronę Wizny, skoro niedaleko jest Nowogród, gdzie rzeczywiście odbyły się ciężkie walki?"[521]

But it is easy to imagine how the glorification of Polish soldiers suits an national imaginary focused on historical scars and tragic events such as the Second World War. The anti-communist policies after 1989 in Poland have focused on lustration policies (*lustracja*), which aim at limiting the participation of former collaborators of the communist regime in political affairs as well as in state administration. The Institute of National Remembrance — Commission for the Prosecution of Crimes against the Polish Nation (*Instytut Pamięci Narodowej — Komisja Ścigania Zbrodni przeciwko Narodowi Polskiemu,* IPN) has been the main body in charge of these policies since 1998. The radical anticommunist discourse developped around the IPN, by politicians such as the Kaczyński twins, is embedded is their nationalist

520 According to the available information, none of the members of the band had any particular ties with Poland prior to the release of the song "40:1"..

521 "One cannot build an identity on a falsified myth. Why should we forcefully praise the defence of Wizna, when not far away we find Nowogród where bloody battles have indeed taken place." Wesołowski, "Wizna: niesłychany mit kampanii wrześniowej?".

outlook. But as the work of historians suggest, there is perhaps more need for a critical self-reflection on the imaginary which frames these anticommunist policies. It seems to be extensively rooted in national-communism as the erasure of crimes, but also of social significations developed before 1989, is a enterpise which has failed in all post-Communist societies. Polish historians who confront this period, the way Wesołowski does, show how these significations have been foundational, for better and often for worse, in the formation of the contemporary Polish state and society.[522]

522 On the extent of nationalism in Poland before 1989, see Zaremba, *Komunizm, legitymizacja, nacjonalizm*.

– Part 3 –
Transgressions: Binaries Revisited

1. Fixity and Fluidity of Hybridity

All the analyses of the two previous chapters confirm the simplistic frameworks of national imaginaries which seem incapable to adapt to complex social and historical conjunctures without relying on reactionary grids of significations. But this conclusion is perhaps not very surprising. The extent to which the reactionary drive is being integrated in the dominant imaginary may appear as more significant. It can be interpreted as a critical sign of the widespread generalised imaginary imbalance of late modernity.

Sociologist Ulrich Beck argues that we have entered such a late, "reflexive modernity". Beck argues what reflexive, or indeed radicalised modernity puts to the foreground: a paradigmatic change in which "we" have no other choice than to reflect on and even think beyond dualisms. It is a paradigmatic change as these dualisms or binaries are "modern mental habits".[523] As we have observed, one particular habit of thought of the modern nationalist imaginaries, is the binary opposition between the Self and the Other. Beck argues that "we" (the *Self*) can no longer imagine "ourselves" in such a binary opposition: the Other is among "us", and even more, "we" are the Other.[524] The most common metaphors for describing

523 Ulrich Beck, "How to think about Science?", interview by David Cayley, CBC Radio One, December 2007

524 This relates of course to what can be described as the postcolonial condition of the contemporary world – a condition that is not new, but which is, or so it seems, more and more experienced in everyday life. Jan Nederveen Pieterse, "Hybridity, So What? The Anti-Hybridity Backlash and the Riddles of Recognition", *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol. 18 , no. 2-3, London, SAGE, 2001, pp. 219-245, p. 238.

what are considered its main attributes, changeability and uncertainty, are the metaphors of fluidity and liquidity.[525]

Cultural hybridity, as it is understood in postcolonial theory, is perceived as having the potential to go beyond the sort of modern binaries from which, as Beck suggests, contemporary social imaginaries have to find a way out. According to Jan Nederveen Pieterse, hybridity is precisely that: "Hybridity is to culture what deconstruction is to discourse: transcending binary categories."[526] But the term *hybridity* and the vast array of concepts it encapsulates have raised already long-running discussions and debates.

Hybridity refers notably to discourses and ideologies of racism. It traces the origins of the term back to the early seventeenth century. Derived from Latin, it was seldom found until the nineteenth century but in biological or botanical descriptions. Robert C. Young points out that in the first half of the nineteenth century, hybridity was used in the context of race mixture, especially in relation to human fertility. The increasing use of the terms "hybrid" and "hybridity" in the nineteenth century "marks the rise of the belief that there could be such a thing as a human hybrid."[527] The belief, in other words, that there are objective human races. A significant aspect which emerges when reviewing the colonialist ideas about hybridity, is how the mixing of races was considered in a negative way. The negative aspect of human

525 "Fluid identities" or "boundaries", "liquid modernity" or even "liquid life" are but a few of the metaphorical expressions extensively used in the past decade. See e.g. Zygmunt Bauman, *Liquid Modernity*, Cambridge, Polity, 2000; *Liquid Life*, Cambridge, Polity, 2005; *Liquid Times: Living in an Age of Uncertainty*, Cambridge, Polity, 2006; Robyn Longhurst, *Bodies: Exploring Fluid Boundaries*, London, Routledge, 2000.

526 Nederveen Pieterse, "Hybridity, So What?", p. 238.

527 Robert C. Young, *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*, London, Routledge, 1995, p. 6.

mixing can be found throughout human history, and it is best defined through the negative perception of its transgressive potential.[528]

It is a positive reinterpretation of this transgressive, revolutionary aspect that runs through the contemporary counter-discourse on hybridity. Terms like *bricolage* (or simply *colage*), *métissage*, *creolisation* and indeed *hybridity* used in cultural studies and related fields do not express the racialist negative take on the concept. As it has been mentioned before, it is the particularity of the hybrid space to be able to transgress, or better, to transcend, to *go beyond*. The hybrid position is no longer seen by some as a "badge of failure or denigration, but as a part of the contestational weave of cultures."[529]

One of the major contemporary theorists recently associated with cultural hybridity is Homi Bhabha. In most of his works, Bhabha considers the interrelations and interdependence between the colonisers and the colonised. Through the colonial experience, the social categories exerted on the colonised (the ideas of superior and inferior human races and cultures for instance) imprints an imaginary, which collides with their own, "displacing" or "disjuncting" it. This "encounter" eventually creates new "hybrid" expressions (of culture, of belonging), which in turn challenge the beliefs and experience of the colonisers. Bhabha argues that these colonial – and postcolonial – cultural systems and statements are constructed in a "liminal space": the "Third Space of Enunciation"[530] Although ground breaking, Bhabha's theory is not without contradictions and has regularly been subject to criticism. A particularly strong criticism is expressed in the work of anthropologist Jonathan Friedman. One

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528 The idea of fertility in the context of nineteenth century racial hybridity is a narrative that runs throughout the colonial experience and maybe even beyond. It was believed that the "hybridisation" of different human races would eventually cause the downfall of the different "pure" species. A downfall caused by supposed sexual lust and infinite fecundity of hybrids or to the contrary by their perceived biological inferiority, which made them barren. Marilyne Brun, "Transgressive Hybridity? The Historical Association of Hybridity and Transgression", Conference paper, Work in Progress Days, 30-31.10.2007, School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne.

529 Nyoongah Mudrooroo,*Writing from the Fringe: A Study of Modern Aboriginal Literature,* Melbourne, Hyland House, 1990, p. 24.

530 The aim of his argument is the deconstruction the colonisers' (and more generally Western and modern) essentialist claims of an inherent purity of culture. Homi Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences", in Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin [eds.], *The Post-Colonial Reader,* London, Routledge, 1995, p. 209.

of the main points of Friedman's critique is the elitist approach of Bhabha's work. He eventually defines the postcolonial theory of hybridity as the ideology of a new elite: a "postmodern" cosmopolitanism.[531] In spite of what will appear to be rather simplistic and sometimes flawed arguments, some elements of Friedman's critique can bring up elements for further reflection.

As much as hybridity theory aims for the deconstruction of essentialist categories, it has been criticised on grounds that it can only make sense "on the assumption of purity."[532] But Nederveen Pieterse adds:

> "Hybridization as a process is old as history, but the pace of mixing accelerates and its scope widens in the wake of major structural changes, such as new technologies that enable new phases of intercultural contact. [...] If practices of mixing are as old as the hills, the *thematization* of mixing as a discourse and perspective is fairly new."

The project of describing hybrid narratives and thematising the experience and the self-conscious perspective is at the core of Bhabha's works on cultural hybridity. [533] These new forms, Bhabha argues, come together as a counter-discourse to the discursive dominance of the hegemonic structures and institutions of colonisation. The main narratives it opposes are what Bhabha considers to be essentialist national narratives of culture and belonging. The significance of these counter-narratives is their negotiation of space where hegemonic discourses homogenise culture and society.[534] The coerciveness of hegemonic narratives can nevertheless be overcome.

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531 Jonathan Friedman, "Global Crisis, the Struggle for Cultural Identity and Intellectual Porkbarelling: Cosmopolitans versus Locals, Ethnics and Nationals in an Era of De-hegemonisation", in Pnina Werbner and Tariq Modood [eds.], *Debating Cultural Hybridity*, London, Zed, 1997, pp.70-89, p. 75.

532 Nederveen Pieterse who has more extensively analysed the debate over hybridity, distinguishes two different varieties. One of those, "new hybridity", is a process that can be observed (Mandarin pop, e.g.). The other variety, "existing or old hybridity", is a discourse and a perspective, which creates a "hybridity consciousness". Additionally, they connect in the experience of the "new" phenomena ("new hybridity") and through the self-conscious perspective taken on performing and experiencing the processes ("existing or old hybridity") Nederveen Pieterse, "Hybridity, So What?", p. 221.

533 In his theorisation, it precisely refers to "the creation of new transcultural forms within the contact zone produced by colonisation." Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies: The Key Concepts, London*, Routledge, 2003, p. 118.

534 This negotiation is a constant endeavour "that seeks to authorize cultural hybridities that emerge in moments of historical transformation." Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, London, Routledge, 2004 [1994], p. 2.

The Third Place of Enunciation in which cultural hybridity comes into constant formation is a place of movement, of "fluidity", which opposes the traditional fixity of national narratives. Referring to artist Renee Green's metaphor of the art gallery as a stairwell Bhabha develops the metaphor for describing the cultural negotiation which takes place in this space of *différance*:

> "The stairwell as liminal space, in-between the designations of identity, becomes the process of symbolic interaction, the connective tissue that constructs the difference between upper and lower, black and white. The hither and thither of the stairwell, the temporal movement and passage that it allows, prevents identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities. This interstitial passage between fixed identifications opens up the possibility of a cultural hybridity that entertains difference without an assumed or imposed hierarchy. "[535]

Cultural hybrid expressions, which have emerged from colonisation, are marginal cultural narratives. The space they need to be expressed cannot be imagined in the binary categories traditionally associated with the modern nationalist imaginaries:

> "[...] the very idea of a pure, 'ethnically cleansed' national identity can only be achieved through the death, literal and figurative, of the complex interweavings of history, and the culturally contingent borderlines of modern nationhood."[536]

From this very brief overview of Bhabha's theory, two dilemmas already emerge. The first is related to the already mentioned problematic "assumptions of purity". The ambivalence of Bhabha's account on the inclusive and exclusive properties of hybridity is confusing. On the one hand, liminal space is supposed to prevent "identities at either end of it from settling into primordial polarities", suggesting that the polarities are in fact the boundaries of liminal space (and not spaces themselves), and as such, are included within the former. On the other hand, it is an "interstitial

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535 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 5.

536 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 7. At the same time, Bhabha sees the discourse of these narratives (as well as his) as *the* discourse of critique that can break down these essentialist barriers and make sense of the historical complexity (opposed to the *historicity* of the hegemonic narratives of the nation). As such, he proposes a further, political perspective for hybridity to take on: "The language of critique is effective not because it keeps forever separate the terms of the master and the slave, the mercantilist and the Marxist, but to the extent to which it overcomes the given grounds of opposition and opens up a space of translation: a place of hybridity, figuratively speaking, where the construction of a political object that is new, neither the one nor the other, properly alienates our political expectations, and changes, as it must, the very forms of our recognition of the moment of politics." *The Location of Culture*, p. 37.

passage between fixed identifications", between fixed "imaginaries", which supposes (just like the concept of "Third Space") that they are indeed spaces. This confusion, although not necessarily contradictory, needs to be clarified.

The second dilemma, which is one of the points of criticism mentioned before, concerns the sources Bhabha uses to describe and conceptualise narrative processes of cultural hybridisation. In *The Location of Culture*, Bhabha draws on a very large array of literary, artistic and theoretical texts. The interweaving of all these texts creates a complex and hermetic whole which can indeed give the impression to voicing an elite condition (albeit marginal) rather than commonality and daily experiences of displacement. The lack of clarity, as mentioned above, helps to produce this impression. But Bhabha describes his endeavour in different terms, and reverses the argument:

> "There is a damaging and self-defeating assumption that theory is necessarily the elite language of the socially and culturally privileged. It is said that the place of the academic critic is inevitably within the Eurocentric archives of an imperialist or neo-colonial West." (1994:19)

Nevertheless, Bhabha has throughout his career been subject to charges of elitism and the like.[537] As we shall see, Friedman's critique of Bhabha's theorisation is no exception.[538]

2. Essentialist Cosmopolitanism

Friedman gives a dramatic and alarming account of the world which is literally falling into pieces, moving away from the neat modernist classifications. Asserting that "the general fragmentation process of the world system" is under way, he

537 See Benjamin Graves, "Homi K. Bhabha: An Overview", 1998, <http://www.scholars.nus.edu.sg/landow/post/poldiscourse/bhabha/bhabha1.html> [accessed 05.06.2008]

538 Jonathan Friedman seems to hold a deeply rooted grudge against postcolonial theory of cultural hybridity as well as towards its theorists. Nederveen Pieterse's considers Friedman's arguments against hybridity to be "[...] representative of a wider view." Nederveen Pieterse, "Hybridity, So What?", p. 224.

considers the concurrent "theorisation of creolisation, métissage, mestisaje, and hybridity"[539] to be:

> "[...] the intellectual cosmopolitan reaction to that process, one that contains a highly ambivalent posture with regard to to the ethnification process itself and the desire for something broader, more global, truly cosmopolitan and above it all. This is the hyphenated reality of the postmodern cosmopolitan, a reality that is defined not by the modern, the abstract, but by the plurality of knowledges, of cultures and of their continuous fusion." (Friedman 1997:75)

If the theorisation of hybridity is the "self-identification" of postmodern cosmopolitans, Friedman argues that "it has little to do with everyday problems of identity in the streets, even as it is part of the same world." This is the recurrent elitist argument against theorists like Bhabha or Paul Gilroy. Friedman provocatively asks: "But who reads the poetry [...]?"[540] What Friedman's criticism explains is his own ideological perspective. Through elements than run throughout his critique, Friedman also presents himself as a proponent of cosmopolitanism, but not of the same "age", or of the same kind of cosmopolitanism. It is significant in the sense that it establishes a framework from which Friedman expresses his criticisms on hybridity theory.

The new condition of the world, the one Bauman describes as "liquid", is defined in Friedman's "neomedievalism" assertions as a sort of chaotic contemporary "Dark Age."[541] In this light, Friedman considers that the "model" for postmodern cosmopolitanism "is not the macro-nation but the medieval Church, the great encompasser. Ecumenical pluralism is the complementary counterpart of fragmented ethnic identities."[542] What transpires here is an opposition between modernity, or the modernist project Friedman associates with it, and what he describes as the postmodern "ethnification" of the world and postmodern cosmopolitanism. Friedman suggests that this condition has taken the world over, "forsaking

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539 Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press,1993, p. 2, quoted in Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 75.

540 Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 74 and 79.

541 Nederveen Pieterse, "Hybridity, So What?", p. 238.

542 Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 75.

modernity."[543] It is in these dark ages that a new cosmopolitanism is thriving. It is"cosmopolitanism without modernism" and yet "not without modernity as such, but without the rationalist, abstract and developmentalist project of modernism."[544] Friedman gives us more explicit clues on his interpretation of the true modernist cosmopolitanism:

> "The cosmopolitan of old was a modernist who identified above and beyond ethnicity and particular cultures. He was a progressive intellectual, a believer in rationality who understood cultural specificities as expressions of universal attributes. The new cosmopolitans are ecumenical collectors of culture. They represent nothing more than a gathering of differences, often in their own self-identifications."[545]

Friedman appears to take the position of a nostalgic herald of the cosmopolitanism "of old". By taking sides with a suggested idealist modernist approach, his critique appears to formulate a struggle for hegemony against what is defined as a political and normative discourse of hybridization.[546] But the binary opposition constructed by Friedman seems to be in fact representative of the essentialist categories precisely opposed by postcolonial theory. But in the following point of his critique, that hybridity bases its possibility of identification on essentialist notions of identity and culture. In turn, it is hybridity theory that is considered essentialist and homogenising.[547]

In relation to the lack of clarity and ambiguities found in Bhabha, and disregarding for now the elitist charge, it is hard not to give a certain credit to Friedman's criticism. It shows how the possible interpreting of liminal space as exclusive of essentialist notions (like those of homogeneous identities), can be considered to consequently reinforce their perceived fixity. A fixity opposed to the movement, to the *différance* contained in the liminal space. And yet, *différance* hints at a different

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543 It is further explained as the "abandonment of the ideal of a strong social project and assimilation to that project" for the sake of multiculturalism, "the expression of a broad shift in the 'identity space' of declining Western modernity." Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 72.

544 Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 76.

545 Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 83.

546 Friedman, "The Hybridization of Roots and the Abhorrence of the Bush", in M.Featherstone and S. Lash [eds.], *Spaces of Culture: City-Nation-World*, London, Sage, 1999, pp.230-255; 242.

547 Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 79.

interpretation. Friedman is again right to point a finger at the fact that "all cultures have always been the product of import and a mix of elements" adding with a sense of superiority that this "was a commonplace for early cultural anthropology".[548]

But this is the point where Friedman's argument is flawed. Conversely, his suggestive defence of modernist cosmopolitanism shows that his take on the work of post-colonial theorists, including Bhabha's, is also based on a misconception. It is in terms of representations and imaginaries that liminal space and hybridity *as well as* essentialist, homogeneous notions of culture and identity can make sense. In consequence, his criticism of "postmodern cosmopolitanism" as an elite discourse may well be justified. But his own discourse, albeit self-identified as being "above and beyond ethnicity" is similarly hegemonic and particularistic. Notwithstanding ambiguities in Bhabha's theorisations, the political project (the "hybrid perspective") is indeed clearly stated. Similarly, other theorists do in fact argue in favour of what is perceived as a political resistance of cultural representations or as a "radical imaginary" which hybridity can produce.[549] The reason why this is a criticism in Friedman's positioning relies on his idealistic representation of the modernist cosmopolitan project. Despite his acute critical look on hybridity, he lacks self-reflexivity.

Heavily relying on Claude Lévi-Strauss, Friedman writes that: "if cultures exchanged all their elements with one another on a continuous basis, there would no longer be any differences, and thus no mutual attraction."[550] The exclusion of relations of power and dominance in the abstract cultural exchanges he mentions show the oversimplification of his perspective. This is a crucial point as the political endeavour of postcolonial theory can precisely be summed up in the deconstruction of power relations – such as the coloniser/colonised relation – that have lead to

548 As a consequence, post-colonial theorists seem to suffer from "a confusion of perspectives". Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 80.

549 In this sense Friedman's political argumentation is correct. There is a self-conscious element of the theorisation of hybridity. But one could argue that this, as well as hybridisation, is self-evident. Discursive formations are precisely about knowledge and power, although again, Friedman seems to discard the Foucauldian approach. Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 72.

550 Friedman, "Global Crisis", p. 77.

hybridisation. This in short means that they are historical relations and that their localised context can hardly produce a systematic theory, even though certain patterns can reappear in different contexts.[551]

Friedman's rationale of modernist cosmopolitanism is in fact representative of Western ethnocentric discourses that carry essentialist notions.[552] Apart from the nostalgic note about faith in rationality, the corollary attribute of the modern cosmopolitan is, according to Friedman, the knowledge about "universal attributes", or more simply, about his own universal identity. It is useful to turn here to the critical insights of Craig Calhoun, who has produced a critical appraisal on belonging and modern cosmopolitanism. Calhoun shows how cosmopolitanism externalises culture as an object of consumption. He concludes his critical appraisal:

> "No one lives outside particularistic solidarities. Some cosmopolitan theorists may believe they do, but this is an illusion made possible by positions of relative privilege and the dominant place of some cultural orientations in the world at large. The illusion is not a simple mistake, but a misrecognition tied to what Pierre Bourdieu called the "illusio" of all social games, the commitment to their structure that shapes the engagement of every player and makes possible effective play. In other words, cosmopolitans do not simply fail to see the cultural particularity and social supports of their cosmopolitanism, but cannot fully and accurately recognize these without introducing a tension between themselves and their social world. And here I would include myself and probably all of us. Whether we theorize cosmopolitanism or not, we are embedded in social fields and practical projects in which we have little choice but to make use of some of the notions basic to cosmopolitanism and thereby reproduce it."[553]

In this perspective, we can easily draw conclusions in relation to the analyses of political discourse promoting national identities. It is evident that these promotions are expressed from the vantage point of an elite, which is disconnected from the realities of the 'commoners' to whom this promotion of projected identities is directed.

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551 This is why Bhabha for instance highlights a necessary interrelation between theory and practice. See Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 19.

552 It also raises the issue of loyalty as it is to be found in the political or "ethical cosmopolitanism" defended by Jürgen Habermas in order to move beyond particularistic solidarities. See e.g. Jürgen Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1998.

553 Calhoun, *Nations Matter,* pp. 25-26.

3. The 'Two Nations' Rap Remix

If hybridity theories are simply elite discursive formations fighting for hegemony with other similar elite formations which all resonate in the discursive field of nationalism, and as a matter of consequence, none of them is able to transcend essentialist categories, we could wonder whether we are left but with bitter cynicism. In spite of this, Calhoun does not refrain from formulating a political perspective in continuum with his self-reflexive discernment:

> "Cosmopolitanism by itself may not be enough; a soft cosmopolitanism that doesn't challenge capitalism or Western hegemony may be an ideological diversion; but some form of cosmopolitanism is needed."[554] (2002)

He suggests that:

> "[...] we should want to transform it, not least because as usually constructed, especially in its most individualistic forms, it systematically inhibits attention to the range of solidarities on which people depend, and to the special role of such solidarities in the struggles of the less privileged and those displaced or challenged by capitalist globalization."[555] (2007:26)

Postcolonial theory and related studies appear as one domain in academia, a traditional locus of cosmopolitanism, where the idea to provide a space for the expression and the formulation of marginal stories of solidarities is fundamental. But it has to be careful not to induce a reification of its own terms. A certain number of studies show how what could be interpreted as new imaginings, as the promotion of hybrid significations, can turn into exclusionary social institutions. For example, Viranjini Munasinghe presents in his case study on Indo-Trinidadians in Trinidad, how state discourse celebrates hybridity and impurity, and as such seems to form a counter-narrative to traditional Western nationalist discourses. However "[l]ike all nationalist narratives [...] it remains a narrative that excludes, in this case those people who were thought to embody purity because they never mixed in the first place."[556]

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554 Calhoun, "Cosmopolitanism is Not Enough: Why Nationalism and the Politics of Identity Still Matter", paper presentation for the National University of Singapore, March 2002

555 Calhoun, *Nations Matter*, p. 26.

556 Viranjini Munasinghe, "Nationalism in Hybrid Spaces: the Production of Impurity out of Purity", *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 29, No. 3, 2002, pp.663-692, p. 685.

Yet, Calhoun suggests that we should not dismiss the value of particularisms. It is, like Bhabha suggests, on the margins of the nation that hybrid perspectives can promote inclusive imaginary significations.[557] In addition, it is "in moments of historical transformation" that "cultural hybridities [...] emerge".[558] In other words, it is *during* critical historical *moments* of struggle, for recognition for instance and not necessarily for hegemony, that new imaginings and significations can emerge. On the same thread, recognition can mean inclusion which, as we suggest in the second chapter of the present study, entails their social imaginary institutionalisation.

In 2005, during the crisis of the *banlieues*, images of French cities burning and falling into chaos were thoroughly aired throughout media networks. As we have mentioned before, politicians also took advantage of the situation, and risk-driven and nationalist discourses were easily justified. The spectacle and experience of the crisis fostered an already latent uneasiness towards French postcolonial minorities and immigrants. But this crisis has also produced a less elitist mobilisation which hoped to counter the dominant imaginary. Many rap or hip hop artists for instance who had in the previous two decades been the heralds of the inhabitants of the *banlieues*, reaffirmed their status as 'older brothers' in the aftermath of the crisis. Musical artist Kery James, whose latest video clip, "Banlieusards" (a slang term designing derives from *banlieue* and refers to its inhabitants) was extensively screened on French television networks and on the World Wide Web in early 2008.[559]

In the video clip of "Banlieusards", we can see a picture frame being passed on from James to many famous and professionally successful people who were raised in the *banlieues*. The frame is passed on throughout the video clip, taking snapshots of

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557 Bhabha, "DissemiNation: time, narrative, and the margins of the modern nation" in Homi Bhabha [ed.], *Nation and Narration*, New York, Routledge, 1990, pp.291-322.

558 Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 2.

559 Since at least 1996, James has been regarded as a spokesman for the "banlieues" along with other members of his rap formation of the 1990's *Ideal J*. They became famous with their first album *Original MC's sur une mission* with notably a song entitled "Ghetto français" ("French Ghetto"). Born in Guadeloupe, James was raised in a housing estate in the south-east of Paris, in Orly. Another more prominent 'older brother' who features in the video clip is former professional football player Lilian Thuram who has regularly expressed his opposition to Sarkozy's discourse and policies.

each of the participants. Under each frame appears a caption with the name and profession of the person in the frame. All the participants join in the final chorus at the end of the clip. The lyrics do not focus on cultural or ethnic themes.[560] But the main theme that runs throughout the song is about the marginal social and economic situation of the peoples of the estates. The people, "we", are opposed here to the state, "them" – and not to the majority community:

> "[...]nous dans les ghettos, eux à L'ENA
> Nous derrière les barreaux, eux au sénat
> Ils défendent leurs intérêts, éludent nos problèmes"[561]

Here James does not address "them", the state officials, but the *banlieusards*. His message is expressed in the rhetorical question: "Mais [...] qu'a-t-on fait pour nous même ?" (But what have we done for ourselves?). The motto "on n'est pas condamné à l'échec" (we are not doomed to failure) is repeated throughout the song and also appears on the shirt James wears in the video clip. What is important is that the theme of ethnicity and cultural particularism is turned upside down. James explicitly expresses the idea of an inclusive French nation:

> " Le 2, ce sera pour ceux qui rêvent d'une France unifiée
> Parce qu'à ce jour y'a deux France, qui peut le nier ?
> Et moi je serai de la 2eme France, celle de l'insécurité
> Des terroristes potentiels, des assistés
> C'est c'qu'ils attendent de nous, mais j'ai d'autres projets
> Qu'ils retiennent ça."[562]

The lyrics read of a significant distinction between the *people* and the *state*, arguing for a unity of the people *without* or regardless of the state – without expressing a revolutionary project of hegemonic institutionalisation. This *shift* in the significations from the master narrative of the nation-state and nationalism can be

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560 There is a brief mention about the varied skin colour of the *banlieusards* and about colonisation.

561 The ENA stands for the National School of Administration (*Ecole Nationale d'Administration*), famously the one institution of higher education in which the majority of French politicians are educated. "We, in the ghettos, they, in the ENA/ We, behind bars, they, in the Senate/ They defend their interests, elude our problems." Kery James, "Balieusards", *À l'ombre du show business*, March 2008.

562 "The 2 will be for those who dream of a unified France/ Because today there are two French nations, who can deny it?/ And I will be of the second France, that of insecurity/ Of potential terrorists, of social security/ This is what they expect from us, but I have other projects/ Let them hold on to that." James, "Balieusards".

regarded as the expression of a sense that emerges during a critical moment. Thematically though, there is no hybrid theme. What we find for instance are themes related to diversity (which is relayed in the video clip) and to a lesser degree of a working class culture. It is not a call for anarchy, but a message driven by a Marxist consideration that the ruling class, driven by its own interest, points to responsibility of the ruling class in diverting attention away from what is socially significant. In relation to hybrid imaginary representations, the process is inclusive of what would traditionally (or in the dominant discourse) be considered the Self and the Other. Both, the "banlieusards" and the rest of French society which is implied are part of the project of unity James expresses. In the perspective of social imaginary significations, we observe in the anti-establishment ideology expressed in the song as a *comprehensive* popular definition – the nation of the French *people* – , is opposed to the nation as it is defined and imagined by the state's professional administrators. This discursive process clearly reminds us the one Sieyès expressed in 1789, where the *Tiers état* was imagined as representing the French people in its entirety.[563]

The potential for hip-hop movements to "transcend the divisions that are ever more openly fostered by the French state" was already identified in 1997 by Steve Canon.[564] The interweaving of cultural, political and social significations that are signified in these productions present what should remain at the centre of hybridity theory: the transcending of exclusionary imaginaries. All other elements in a study – such as the ones presented in this work – are socially and historically localised. It is clear that it is about providing a space for marginal stories rather than risking the reification of new forms which do not necessarily follow or express new social significations.

Radical social imaginary significations are indeed political transgressions, and it is expected to oppose these to fixed, traditional expressions of culture. What

563 See Chapter 2, Part 1.3 of the present work.

564 Steve Canon, "Paname City Rapping: B-boys in the *banlieues* and beyond", A. Hargreaves and M. McKinney [eds], *Post-Colonial Cultures in France*, London, Routledge, 1997, pp. 150-166, p. 163.

Friedman's criticism of Bhabha indirectly point to, is the importance of class and social relations in the context of cultural expressions and significations.[565] If we take Friedman's anthropological statement for granted, namely that all cultures are the result of a process of hybridisation, logically, the spaces of the Self and those of the Other are the obsolete "third spaces of enunciation" for those that identify with them. This raises of course problems about the historical development of cultures. It suggests that crystallisations of cultural significations are part of their evolution. As far as nationalism is concerned, our historical inquiry implied it was once a third space set of significations which has crystallised as first and fixed space of enunciation. Similarly, when an identified hybrid culture is reified and institutionalised by state discourses and practices, even though these originally echo a popular signification, and however novel it may appear, it eventually becomes a represented closed space of enunciation. It consequently loses its radical power to become an established instituted and instituting imaginary.[566]

565 This may be lacking in Bhabha's account, inasmuch as one does not consider national and traditional hegemonic cultures related to one particular class, which, as our study suggests, may well be the case.

566 This is why it is fundamental to stress the historical 'locality' rather than the linear historicity of these phenomena. The historicity can bring validation to expressions perceived as long-running historically (such as perceived traditions, which are generally legitimation for instituted imaginary significations) whereas "new" forms will be discarded as simply invented, momentary creations of marginal, up-rooted, unstable or ill-identified people. Whichever term is preferred, what hybridity theory points to, when interpreted as a historical auto-ecosystem of cultural formation, is not only to significations of 'race', of *métissage*, but also of gender, class and maybe above all of imaginary significations that are constantly subjected to *différance*. Bhabha is perhaps wrong in defining the "place of hybridity" as something new. Theorising hybridity as " neither the one nor the other" is maybe theoretically very attractive, a revolutionary *tabula rasa*, but it does not have the performative potential he claims it has. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture*, p. 37.

– Closure –
De Nihilo

The labyrinth which we originally entered now appears to have been the threshold to other representations. But beyond metaphors, the epistemological approach attempted in this study looked for localised historical moments as discursive original spaces of enunciation and to analyse parts of the imaginary significations they include and exclude. If our dominant social representations, our imaginary spaces close up, the struggle for recognition becomes indeed a struggle for hegemony, as it was observed in the significations and evolution of the republican imaginary during the pre-national modern period. Binary categories can not be transcended if they are discarded. The *modus operandi* which has been historically successful appears to be the interplay between the inclusion of radical significations which, however paradigmatic they are, are marginal and minor in accountable terms. But their social institutionalisation *comprehends* their associations with already instituted imaginary significations. Following Calhoun's suggestion, we should seek to transform established significations as no one is above the established particularistic – and hence essentialist – modes of thinking.

“Nothing is lost, nothing is created, everything is transformed” goes the principle expressed by Anaxagoras. However, in the world of human culture, certain 'things' certainly get lost. But if the mode through which social meanings change is indeed an auto-eco-system, then no significations are created with nothing but are rather created from nothing – *cum nihilo* and *ex nihilo* as Castoriadis writes.[567] It means that radical significations are yet but part of a potential imaginary which our formulations do not include. But as human history goes, all can and will be somehow transformed.

567 See e.g. Castoriadis, *The Imaginary Institution*, pp. 359-364.

– Conclusion –

> "J'ai glissé dans cette moitié du monde pour laquelle l'autre n'est que décor"[568]

The first of the introductory questions which motivated this study was concerned with the *mode* through which nationalism, as a social imaginary, is being reproduced in contemporary European societies. On the tour of nationalist texts presented and analysed in this work, nationalism appears as a fundamental characteristic of our contemporary social imaginaries – in Europe, but also of an embryonic global civilisation. It cannot be reduced to the account of particular nationalisms. Independently from where we look at nationalism, as a social imaginary, nationalism informs our rationalised mapping out of the world, synthesising a global complexity beyond comprehension, but maybe not beyond imagination. Nationalism, as a political doctrine or a shared set of social beliefs, tends to hide or resist the transcultural reality of the post-colonial and post-Cold War world (dis)order.

Layout

It is complicated to assess the extent to which state-based promotions of nationalism echo popular cultural expressions. Such promotions seem to have mixed electoral results. The cultural signification of nations, at least in states which present us with long running national imaginary institutions – which is the case for Britain, France and Poland – has to be assumed as a social reality. Some of the expressions of these institutions prevent the imaginary institution of the plurality of societies, while they also channel imaginary negotiations between the inherent plurality of human societies and the political principle of nation-states.

In the first chapter, we analysed the dominant features of nationalism in a critical overview of representations and academic theories about nationalism. The inherent

568 Annie Ernaux, *La Place*, Paris, Gallimard, 1983, p. 96

deterministic aspect of nationalist imaginings prompted the elaboration of an theoretical framework in the second chapter, which was intended to make sense of closed representations without falling in the trap of the reproduction of the deterministic outlook of its object of study. The hold of national imaginaries on history, which was another dominant feature of nationalism made explicit in the first chapter, inspired the historical inquiry in the third chapter before engaging with an analysis of contemporary discourses promoting nationalism. The transhistorical, although fragmentary, understanding which stemmed from the third chapter led to the observation of recurrent modalities in the reproduction of nationalist significations in the three nation-states under study.

Nationalism, its doctrine, its tools, its particular formations, have been and are being formed transculturally.[569] As such, a particular national imaginary never stands alone – it takes other such formations for granted through their correlations. Through the history and formation of nationalism in the three European nation-states involved in this study, it has become clear that representations which are perhaps useful for obtaining a rational view of our globalised world, are based precisely on what this view is hiding: a continuous crossing of walls and borders. Such is the norm of the formation of cultures. The fact that many conventional anthropologists applied a similar approach exclusively to so-called primitive cultures thus refraining from applying it to their own western cultures expresses the ethnocentric state of mind and the preconceived superiority and particularity of one's own position.

In the contemporary period, the 're-nationalisation' of political ideologies – also expressed in the swing from communist and socio-democratic political discourses in favour of a more liberal discourse – resulted in the narrowing of the terminology expressing the complexity of social issues. The political scope of negotiations of social significations has thus been reduced to identity politics. This is perhaps in the process of being reassessed in reaction to the economic crisis which started in 2008. The crisis has awakened a renewed interest for traditional anti-capitalist

569 If one could say “transnationally” here, it would be inaccurate. It would mean that nations are considered as homogeneous cultural formations, which goes against the present argumentation.

philosophies and ideologies, such as Marx's analyses. But beyond the insight of Marx and the terminology of Marxism, we would argue that it is rather in the opposition between privileged and under-privileged classes that the lines of contemporary negotiations of social significations are being redefined.[570] The spectacular focus on cultural issues in the past decades was also nourished by the lack of clear political lines of opposition, effectively homogenising mainstream political programmes. In reaction to a reduced scope of social negotiations, this is perhaps equally in the process of being reassessed.

Chaos

In the wake of the multiple crises of the first decades of the twenty-first century, nationalism in Europe is predominantly state-centred and, as such, cannot be the vessel for anti-establishment liberal discourse as it perhaps was the case in other historical contexts – such as during the struggles against the *Anciens Régimes* in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries and the colonial liberations during the second half of the twentieth century. From significations of dissent, nationalist terms of social negotiations have shifted to continua of representations. This linearity has allowed the promotion and imposition and the more or less conscious and accepted homogenisation of social imaginaries around central state institutions (actual or projected). Since the end of the Cold War, the closure of the imaginary is being defined though a new irreducible Other which replaces race as a dominant signification of social exclusion: cultural identities. This relates to the failure of the so-called cultural turn and of cultural relativism which *in fine* have backfired after their confrontation with traditional and reactionary representations. The fact that political and social movements who claim to be representing the working class – which is the case of the EDL – base their discourses on notions such as identity and reduced representations of culture seems to confirm the backlash of anti-racist discourse. The cultural struggle (as opposed to class struggle) has exchanged vertical

570 It appears as a more pragmatic and open way to describe the demands for social and economic justice as it is expressed for instance in Kery James's song presented in the last section of the fourth chapter and which seems to be expressed in the wave of protests in Tunisia and Egypt in winter 2010-2011 which were still ongoing while these lines were being written.

power relations for horizontal power relations, leaving the former virtually unchallenged. Through the definition of the Other as the 'culturally different', however shallow the definition of the Other may be, social struggles have turned to subjective perceptions for legitimacy more often than they have turned to the complexity of integral cultural power. This creates, among other effects, a new impetus for 'monocultures', based on the principle that common values – often translated into ethnic attributes – are sufficient to enact social ties.

On hindsight, this evolution is perhaps less surprising that it is in fact worrying. The modern radical imaginary has always contained authoritarian grids of significations. In a transhistorical perspective, the authoritarian historical moments have imprinted significations beyond the historical moments during which authoritarian and reactionary significations were formulated and institutionalised. As a result, they enclose imaginary spaces of subsequent grids of significations and restrict the creative potential of social entropy. These enclosures trigger the demand for an imaginary order which has to partly include significations in order to disintegrate the grid of their authoritarian form.[571] The order which was established in the aftermath of the Second World War is an example of such an evolution. It presented features which had been synthesised by Nazi ideology. The original ideological synthesis of these features in the particular form of Nazism was, at least as a state-based and dominant ideology, certainly disintegrated. But as Nazi ideology was itself based on significations also developed in liberal and communist states, some of these associations, such as the intimate relationship between a state and a culturally defined population, were not broken up and were reproduced to support the post-war order.[572] By extension, these processes suggest, alongside the banalisation of nationalist discourses, that national European imaginaries contain potential significations which tend to reproduce a totalitarian character basing in their

571 The case Nazism – which is here understood as the extremely rationalised association of xenophobia, racism and nationalism – confirms this argument as it still appears as a a fundamental referent in contemporary imaginaries.

572 In spite of their many differences, the social movements in Eastern and Western Europe in the late 1960s and 1970s can be read as local expressions which opposed the socially and politically reactionary ideologies of the period.

discursive opposition to historical totalitarian ideologies such as Nazism. Whether a new synthesis, such as the one expressed by the EDL centred on Islamophobia, will carry on spreading is uncertain. In the light of the analysis carried out in the present work, we can expect that such formulations will at least maintain their marginal positions in the foreseeable future.

The appropriation of national symbolism and nationalist discourse in mainstream political discourse presents us with different problems. While it is perhaps intended as a resolution of problems of social cohesion and of the crisis of political representation, the results of these utilisations of nationalism are not conclusive. Beyond these issues, their interplay with the dominant neoliberal economic policies – which tend to hamper the traditional ties of social solidarities based on traditional nation-state institutions, such as social security or pension funds – raises questions about the reasons for the association of neoliberal policies with national identity politics by political elites. This brings us back to the idea that contemporary lines of demarcation are being negotiated between the privileged political and economic elites and the rest of society. To assess the extent to which clear-cut national spaces favour the restoration of the power of economic elites which processes of neoliberalisation re-establish, we would need to extend our study to economic discourses and reassess the present conclusions accordingly.

The various global crises, the political and social stagnation of the European Union and perhaps the barely escapable national mindset, brood a generalised feeling of dissatisfaction which may lead to the inquest of a new imaginings and new institutions.[573] While a number of existing threads appear as worthy of attention -- such as the threads of democracy, of open systems of knowledge and of complexity – the actual grid of significations that may counter the contemporary reactionary drive, is an imaginary radicality that is yet too marginal for its dominant institutionalisation. The radical ideology which would reflect these significations would not only need to take contemporary economic issues into account, but social

573 The popular risings in Tunisia and Egypt in winter 2010-2011, which may spark further revolt across the region, suggest that such a feeling of dissatisfaction of people against their rulers cannot be excluded.

and environmental issues as well. In addition, the complexities of the global variety of cultural formations would also need to be taken into account. Independently of the many differences and variations, global issues we are faced with are by definition humanity's common issues. This presents the extent of the challenge to come. Concerning nationalism, the inherent ambivalence between cultural and political belonging (between nationality and citizenship for instance) would perhaps benefit from a reconfiguration in imaginaries which would include national processes of identification without retaining them as the only social formations of cultural and political legitimacy. In this perspective, the prospect could be defined in the imaginary institution of a culture of complexity, which to be cultural in the true sense of the word, would need to become a social *praxis* of conscious and reciprocally responsible acting powers – these individuals being part of the elites or of the multitudes.[574]

574 The concept of multitude was elaborated by Michael Hardt andAntonio Negri in contrast to their concept of a global empire. Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Multitude: War and Democracy in the Age of Empire*, New York. Penguin Press, 2004. See also Yann Moulier Boutang [ed.], *Politique des Multitudes: Démocracie, intelligence collective et puissance de la vie à l'heure du capitalisme cognitif*, Paris, Editions Amsterdam, 2007.

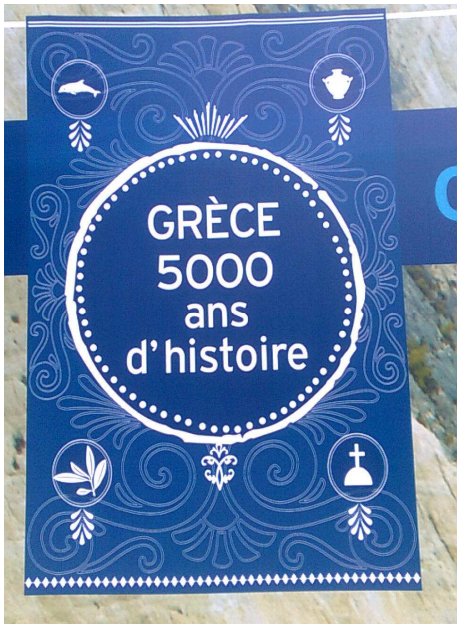
– Annexes –

Annex 1

A graffiti tag in Lyon, France, 2008 (personal archives):

Annex 2

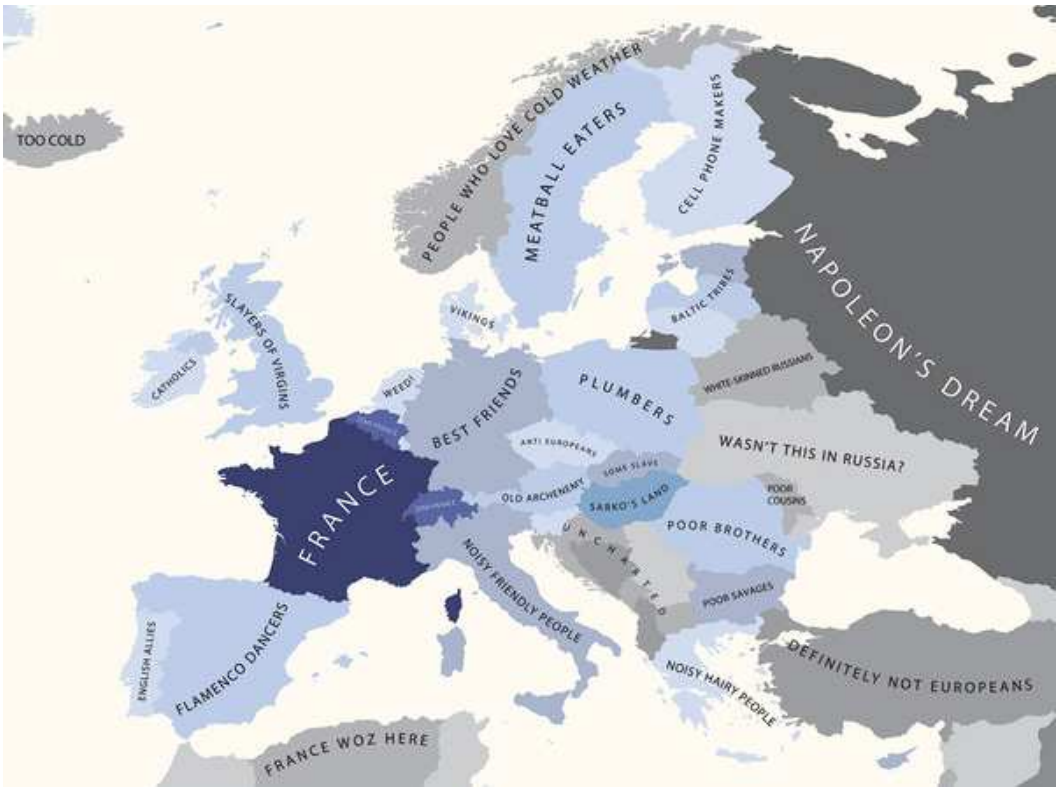
Promotional posters in Athens, Greece, during the summer of 2009 (personal archives):



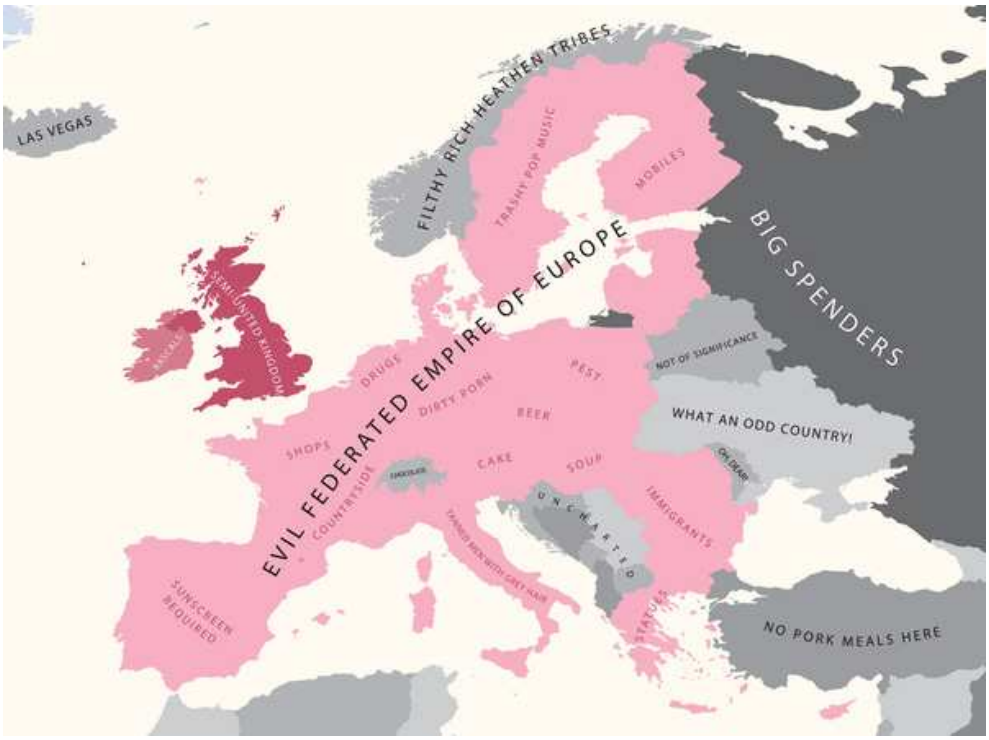
Annex 3

Three pieces of Yanko Tsvetkov's "Mapping Stereotypes: The Geography of Prejudice", available online at: http://alphadesigner.com/project-mapping-stereotypes.html

"Where I Live" (Editorial for Süddeutsche Zeitung, June 2009



"Europe According to France"



"Europe according to Britain"

Annex 4

Amateur “Mappings”

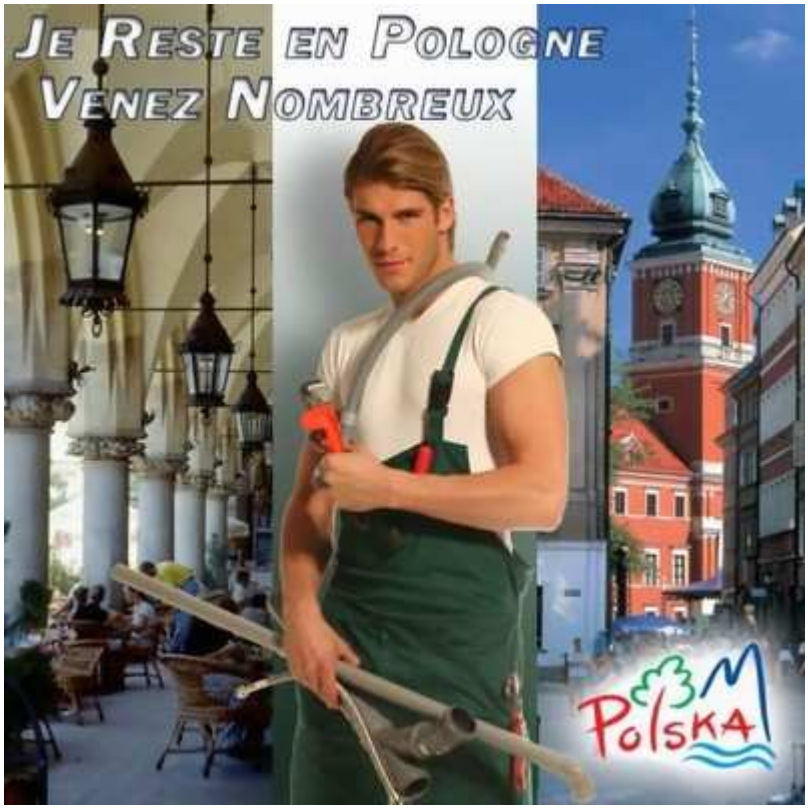
“Europa według polaków” [Europe according to Poles], Author and source unknown

Selected translations:

Greece: “hot!”; Ukraine: “ours”, “the Russians'”; Lithuania: “ours”; Estonia and Latvia: “Lithuania 2 and 3”; Spain: “Strawberries”; Portugal: “Little Spain”; Norway and Iceland: “cold”;

Annex 5

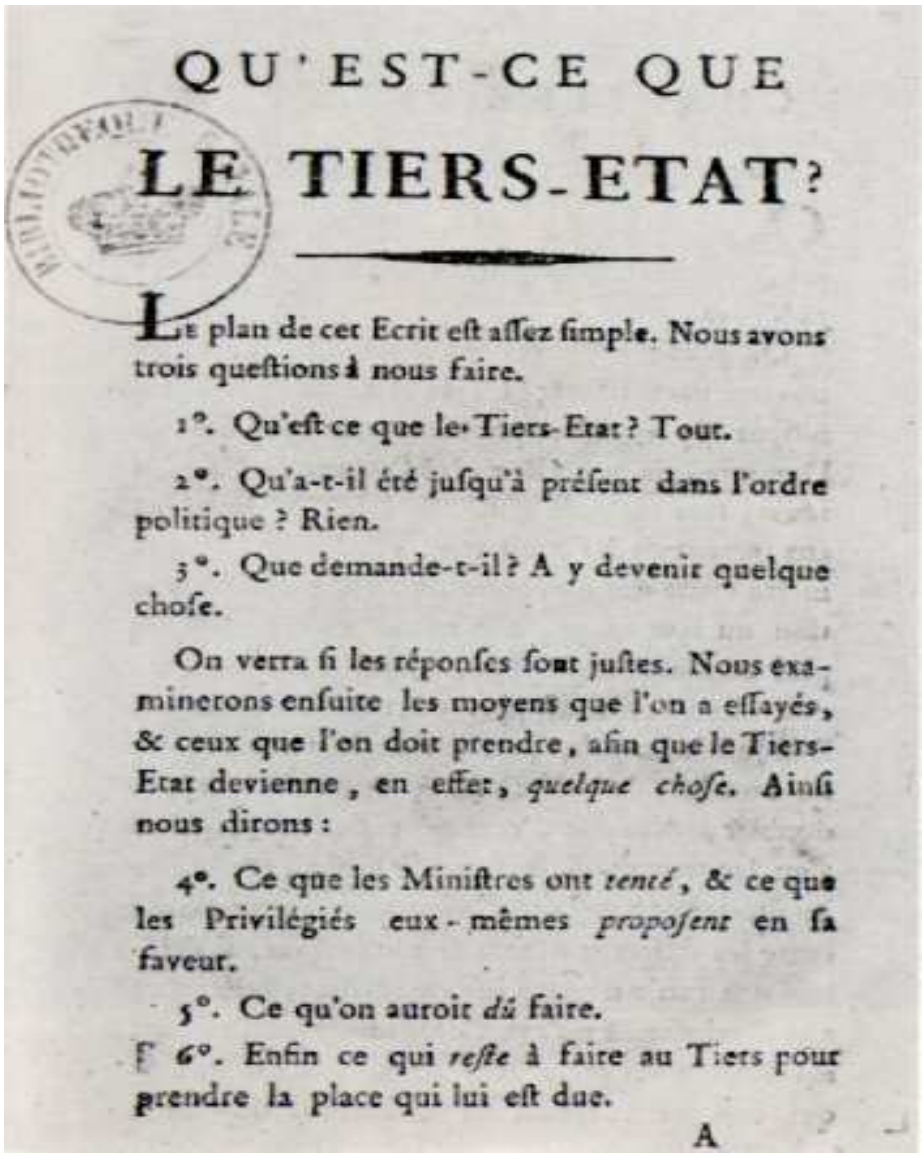
Polish tourist board “Polish plumber” campaign poster



Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4115164.stm [retrieved 03.02.2007]

Annex 6

Reproduction and translation of the introduction of *Qu'est-ce le Tiers état?* by Joseph-Emmanuel Sieyès



QU'EST-CE QUE

LE TIERS-ETAT?

Le plan de cet Ecrit eſt aſſez ſimple. Nous avons trois queſtions à nous faire.

1°. Qu'eſt ce que le Tiers-Etat? Tout.

2°. Qu'a-t-il été juſqu'à préſent dans l'ordre politique? Rien.

3°. Que demande-t-il? A y devenir quelque choſe.

On verra ſi les réponſes ſont juſtes. Nous examinerons enſuite les moyens que l'on a eſſayés, & ceux que l'on doit prendre, afin que le Tiers-Etat devienne, en effet, *quelque choſe*. Ainſi nous dirons:

4°. Ce que les Miniſtres ont *tenté*, & ce que les Privilégiés eux-mêmes *propoſent* en ſa faveur.

5°. Ce qu'on auroit *dû* faire.

6°. Enfin ce qui *reſte* à faire au Tiers pour prendre la place qui lui eſt due.

A

First page of Joseph Sieyes's (1748-1836) pamphlet Qu'est ce que le Tiers Etat? 1789, *Wikipedia*, Creative Commons, <http://fr.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fichier:Qu27est_ce_que_le_Tiers_Etat.jpg> [accessed 29.11.2010]

Translation

“What is the Third estate?

The plan of this work is quite simple. There are three questions we need to ask ourselves.

What is the Third estate? Everything.

What has it been in the political order? Nothing.

What is it asking for? To become something in this order.

We will see if the answers are just. We shall then examine the means which have been put off, and those which need to be implemented, in order for the Third estate to become *something* in effect. We will thus write:

What were the *attempts* of the Ministers, and what the privileged orders themselves *propose* in its favour.

What *should* have been done.

Finally, what *remains* for the Third estate to take its due place.”

Annex 7

Portrait of Stanisław Antoni Szczuka (1652? - 1710), Polish noble, politician and writer (Anonymous author).

Source: Wikimedia Commons, <http://pl.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Plik:Stanislaw_Antoni_Szczuka_%281652_1654-1710%29.jpg&filetimestamp=20060707032407> [retrieved 22.07.2010]

Annex 8

Nicolas Sarkozy – Campaign Clip on National Identity (transcript)

Dramatic Music in the background[575]

[ensemble, la France sera / un pays respecté et aimé]

Close-medium shot "Mes chers compatriotes, je suis candidat à la présidence de la RF. Eh bien, un candidat à la présidence de la RF, cela doit parler de la France. Je crois à l'identité de la nation française. Je crois à l'identité nationale. La France n'est pas une race, la France n'est une ethnie, la France est une communauté de valeurs, c'est un idéal, c'est une idée. La France est une multitude de petites patries qui, en s'additionnant en on fait une grande. Nous avons notre identité et nous devons la défendre."

Mise-en-abîme, Talking to children: "Ce que vous êtes aujourd'hui c'est le produit des générations qui vous ont précédés. On n'a pas le droit de tourner le dos à ça. Et vous-mêmes vous transmettrez le flambeau à une autre génération, vous transmettrez des valeurs, des modes de vie, des règles."

Close-medium shot "Alors j'ai dit "il faut identité et immigration" Pourquoi ? Parce que la France doit accueillir de nouveaux français, des français venus de plus loin. Nous les accueillerons avec leur propre identité, mais eux, ceux qui nous rejoignent, doivent accepter l'idée que la France vient de bien loin, qu'elle a commencé avant eux, et qu'ils doivent eux la respecter."

Interview : « Les femmes, en France, sont libres, comme les hommes, libres de circuler, libres de se marier, libres de divorcer, le droit à l'avortement, l'égalité entre les hommes et les femmes, ça fait partie aussi de notre identité.

[La France est un grand pays/ soyons fiers d'être français]

Close-medium shot "Si on ne dit plus à ceux qui viennent, à ceux qui veulent devenir français, ce qu'est la France, comment voulez-vous qu'on les intègre ? [intégration] L'échec de l'intégration à la française, c'est parce qu'on a oublié de parler de la

575 All text in italics concern is the present author's description of the style of the video; all text in brackets are captions transcribed from the original video.

France. Moi je ne veux pas oublier la France parce que la France est le cœur de mon projet. A tous ceux qui veulent devenir français, je veux leur dire que je vais leur rendre la fierté d'être français, mais que la France mérite d'être aimée, mérite d'être respectée, et que la France est porteuse d'un idéal qu'il faut partager ou refuser. Je comprends qu'on puisse le refuser, mais si on le partage, alors il faut aimer la France."

[ensemble tout devient possible / sarkozy.fr]

The video clip is available online [accessed 24.11.2007]:
<http://www.dailymotion.com/video/x1qz2d_lidentite-nationale>

Annex 9

Sabaton, “40:1” [*The Art of War*, Black Lodge Records, 2008]

Baptised in fire.
40 to 1

So silent before the storm
Awaiting command
A few has been chosen to stand
As one outnumbered by far
The orders from high command
Fight back, hold your ground

In early September it came
A war unknown to the world
No army may enter that land
That is protected by Polish hand
Unless you are 40 to 1
Your force will soon be undone

Baptised in fire
40 to 1
Spirit of Spartans
Death and glory
Soldiers of Poland
Second to none
Wrath of the Wehrmarcht brought to a halt

The 8th of September it starts
The rage of the Reich
A barrage of mortars and guns
Stand fast, the bunkers will hold
The captain has pledged his life
I'll face my fate here!
The sound of artillery strike
So fierce
The thunder of guns

So come, bring on all that you've got
Come hell, come high water,
Never stop
Unless you are 40 to 1
Your lives will soon be undone

Baptised in fire
40 to 1
Spirit of Spartans
Death and glory
Soldiers of Poland
Second to none
Wrath of the Wehrmacht brought to a halt

Always remember, a fallen soldier
Always remember, fathers and sons at war
Always remember, a fallen soldier
Always remember, fathers and sons at war
Always remember, a fallen soldier
Always remember, buried in history

No army may enter that land
That is protected by Polish hand
Unless you are 40 to 1
Your force will soon be undone

Baptised in fire
40 to 1
Spirit of Spartans
Death and glory
Soldiers of Poland
Second to none
Wrath of the Wehrmarcht brought to a halt

No, no, no

Lyrics taken from Rafał Roskowiński, *Wizna 1939, 40 1: Art of War*, R&R, 2008

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– Résumé –

Introduction

Nietzsche décrivait le nationalisme de son temps comme une couche de glace. Celle-ci a peut-être bien fondu depuis. Et ainsi les eaux du nationalisme ont continué de se répandre. Cette dissémination – sociale et historique – du nationalisme implique une forme de transformation. Compte tenu de la dimension sociale et historique de l'épiphénomène qu'est le nationalisme,[576] sa reproduction dans le temps et ses transformations se font écho. C'est dans ce sens-là que nous pouvons parler de nationalisme au singulier. Il en va de même pour ce qu'on appelle aujourd'hui le néolibéralisme. La variété des phénomènes ou des représentations englobées par le terme de néolibéralisme est telle qu'elle présente de nombreuses contradictions.

Ainsi, il est difficile de définir simplement un champ imaginaire autrement que par la description analytique d'un champ en particulier. Ainsi, nous considérons que la pratique théorique et la pratique empirique se forment et s'informent l'une l'autre. Avant de pouvoir élaborer un raisonnement théorique dans l'optique de considérer le nationalisme comme un champ imaginaire social – un champ dont l'imaginaire social est la nature métaphorique -, il importe de considérer le terme de nationalisme lui-même et ses significations formelles contemporaines.

Ainsi, le premier chapitre de ce travail de thèse prend comme point de départ un bref aperçu de phénomènes décrits comme émanant du nationalisme. Cet aperçu prend comme point de départ le plus grand bouleversement social et historique contemporain – qui est la réunion d'une certaine Europe et dont la date de 1989 est

[576] Cette étude étant portée sur l'imaginaire social, défini par Castoriadis à travers deux dimensions de l'expérience humaine, le social et l'historique - car l'un n'a pas de sens sans l'autre dans le cadre de l'imaginaire social -, la terminologie de « social-historique » empruntée à Castoriadis sera utilisée pour faire référence directement à ce cadre.

devenue le symbole.[577] Certaines acceptions des sens communs du terme nationalisme peuvent ainsi être observées. Ils sont le point de départ de l'élucidation de quelques points théoriques du champ d'étude sur le nationalisme. La nature de la relation entre les deux permet de contraster le savoir sur le nationalisme avec sa reproduction formelle sociale-historique. En élaborant sur cette approche critique, un certains nombre d'approches contemporaines sont misent en avant pour définir une compréhension assez large et remise au goût du jour du ou des sens formels du terme nationalisme.

En prenant en compte certaines des avancées dans le domaine d'étude du nationalisme, le deuxième chapitre opère un glissement pour élucider le cadre de l'étude, c'est-à-dire acquérir une compréhension de ce qu'est l'imaginaire social. Tout en gardant à l'esprit l'optique de nouer le champ d'étude sur le nationalisme avec celui de l'imaginaire social, ce chapitre rend compte de certains recoupements théoriques – et certaines fois des décrochages – qui s'opèrent entre plusieurs disciplines, telles que la linguistique, la philosophie ou encore l'anthropologie. Toutes ces relations rendent à leur tour compte d'un certain mode de fonctionnement de l'imaginaire. Ce fonctionnement peut se définir comme le mode transculturel de (re)production des significations imaginaires. D'un point de vue conceptuel, la signification apparaît comme un cycle de glissement d'une dimension imaginaire à une autre. Mais ceci est un cycle imparfait. La raison principale en est l'expérience du temps. Et cette expérience est certainement très lourde de significations pour l'espèce humaine. Ainsi, ce filage de significations influe très fortement sur le moment dont il devient le passé.

La problématique de ce travail de thèse est contenue dans les questions suivantes : comment, et donc dans une certaine mesure pourquoi, le nationalisme se reproduit-il comme un imaginaire dominant à l'époque contemporaine ? Tournée de façon plus normative, la question peut être reformulée de la façon suivante : malgré sa

[577] Il s'agit bien de situer ce symbole dans l'espace de référence européen, qui est celui de l'auteur. Certaines conséquences de ce bouleversement ont certes été globales (une nouvelle étape dans le capitalisme globalisé, le néolibéralisme, par exemple), et d'autres phénomènes participent peut-être aussi d'une tendance plus globale de libéralisation, telle qu'elle a pu également s'exprimer à Taïwan en 1987, ou encore en 1989 en Chine.

banalisation, au sens où l'entend Michael Billig, cet imaginaire ne reproduit-il pas un caractère totalitaire que le sens commun du nationalisme lui reconnaît pourtant ? Ces questions se fondent sur l'analyse originale de Benedict Anderson de la nation comme communauté imaginée et sur l'élaboration théorique de l'imaginaire social selon Cornelius Castoriadis.

1. Le labyrinthe du nationalisme

Le nationalisme – dont le champ est vaste et ramifié – se définit à la fois en relation avec les objets d'étude et par l'approche de ladite étude. Les études sur le nationalisme menées depuis quelques décennies ont certainement répondu à un grand nombre de questions à son sujet. Néanmoins, nous pouvons sans exagérer observer qu'elles ont également laissé de nouvelles questions en suspens. Après la chute du bloc soviétique, beaucoup avait le sentiment qu'un monde nouveau – que l'on espérait meilleur – était en gestation. Certaines projections idylliques dépeignaient un monde enfin uni et libéré du joug de l'idéologie. Le nationalisme, qui apparaissait comme une de ces idéologies arriérées, se devait donc de disparaître. Cependant, l'on oubliait qu'une partie de ce que l'on célébrait, l'indépendance, la démocratie, l'auto-détermination, avait un prix et qu'à l'époque moderne, ces dernières n'ont presque toujours pris forme que dans un cadre nationaliste.

La dernière décennie du XXe siècle fut ainsi un triste rappel que le nationalisme ne s'était pas fané et qu'il hantait toujours les rêves et les cauchemars du monde d'après la guerre froide. En effet, au grand dam des « messies » des temps nouveaux, l'histoire ne s'est pas arrêtée.[578] Dans le cas du nationalisme, certains observateurs mieux avisés écriront que « le nationalisme régnait en maitre » (Norman M. Naimark). Ce que l'on a appelé la balkanisation de l'ex-Yougoslavie en est certainement la plus terrible des manifestations. De guerres civiles en massacres,

[578] La thèse de la fin de l'histoire est associée à Francis Fukuyama : in "The End of History?", *The National Interest 16*, Summer 1989 et *The End of History and the Last Man*, New York, Free Press, 1992.

sept nouveaux états-nations ont émergé (le dernier en date étant le Kosovo en 2008) en développant un nouveau discours identitaire en opposition avec le discours nationaliste yougoslave ainsi qu'avec les discours nationalistes des nations voisines.[579]

La violence de cette manifestation du nationalisme – qui va rappeler celle de l'Allemagne nazie – va reconduire le sens commun du nationalisme comme étant confiné à une idéologie extrémiste et totalitaire. Cependant, au milieu des années 1990, le sociologue Michael Billig observait la dynamique de fond du nationalisme (dans ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler les états-nations établis), en analysant comment, sur une durée plus longue, le discours du nationalisme s'est « banalisé », ou plus simplement, comment il s'est reproduit pour former un inconscient collectif.

Ainsi, le premier chapitre interroge la relation entre le sens commun et le sens universitaire du terme nationalisme. Dans quelle mesure le sens commun reconnaît-il ce caractère totalitaire et comment les théories sur le nationalisme le comprennent-elles ? Le sens commun reconnaît ce caractère dans l'expression radicale, extrémiste du nationalisme. La première sous-partie présente cette analyse à travers un court inventaire des manifestations du nationalisme en Europe depuis 1989. Les théories sur le nationalisme font traditionnellement écho à la conception du nationalisme au sens commun tout en lui reconnaissant d'autres formes. La dichotomie entre le nationalisme dit « civique » et le nationalisme dit « ethnique » est emblématique de ces théories. Cette classification fut élaborée par Hans Kohn et se retrouve plus tard largement réutilisée et discutée.[580]

Hans Kohn étudiait le phénomène nationaliste à un moment de l'histoire qui allait voir l'apparition du nationalisme-socialisme. Le nazisme est certainement un des exemples les plus flagrants d'une idéologie totalitaire. Mais Kohn reconnaissait déjà au nationalisme des manifestations plus variées. La classification qui s'ensuit peut

[579] Comme le montre l'exemple de la Macédoine, la contestation de symboles nationaux ne se limitait pas aux nations émergeantes de l'ex-Yougoslavie, mais également aux états-nations plus anciens, et, en l'occurrence, à la Grèce.

[580] Cette discussion est certainement un des axes clefs dans le développement du champ d'étude sur le nationalisme.

être considérée comme une tentative de comprendre le national-socialisme tout en reconnaissant des formes « positives » du nationalisme. Mais cette dichotomie va ainsi opposer les nationalismes britannique ou français (ou occidentaux en général) au nationalisme allemand (ou oriental). Dans le premier cas, les nationalismes occidentaux sont dits civiques, c'est-à-dire que l'on considère qu'ils se fondent sur la citoyenneté et la société civile ;[581] dans le deuxième cas, les liens primordiaux sont ceux du sang et de la terre.

En passant sur les amalgames et les simplifications, cette dichotomie, qui peut certes apparaître dans certains cas comme un outil de réflexion, est elle-même idéologisée car elle a historiquement été une vision moraliste des phénomènes nationalistes plus qu'une approche critique. Elle participe à la banalisation du nationalisme en sous-entendant que les formes civiques – opposées, donc, aux formes ethniques – n'ont pas l'atavisme ni le caractère exclusif des formes orientales. S'il ne fait pas de doute que c'est bien le cas pour le nazisme, il serait trompeur de considérer que les autres nationalismes sont essentiellement différents et d'attribuer au seul nationalisme allemand (du moins jusqu'à la moitié du XXe siècle), les excès du nationalisme et des phénomènes d'exclusion associés.

L'approche critique qu'explicitent Michael Billig et Craig Calhoun précise que cette dichotomie reproduit un sens erroné. Alors que le sens commun ne reconnaît que le nationalisme des « autres », certaines théories reproduisent à leur tour cette projection en différenciant un nationalisme jugé comme modéré et civique, et en l'opposant au nationalisme extrême et culturel. De fait, même dans les cas où certains auteurs reconnaissent leur propre nationalisme méthodologique (selon l'expression d'Ulrich Beck), celui-ci est différencié du nationalisme au sens commun. Il en va de même pour d'autres catégories d'analyse, telles que le concept d'*ethnie* développé par Anthony D. Smith. En réifiant ou en idéalisant les communautés pré-nationales, et malgré un grand raffinement du cadre d'analyse des théoriciens ethno-symbolistes tels que les cadres élaborés par Smith, ce concept

[581] On peut même considérer que la forme civique – qui est une forme idéalisée – est perçue comme émanant du progrès et de la modernité européenne qui était vue (et peut-être l'est-t-elle toujours d'une certaine façon) comme la civilisation même.

amène à une lecture essentialiste et déterministe de ce que sont l'ethnicité et le nationalisme.

L'importance donnée à « l'origine ethnique des nations » au cours des dernières décennies n'est pas seulement liée à la résurgence du nationalisme dans ce qu'il est convenu d'appeler l'est de l'Europe, elle est également en partie liée au discours politique réactionnaire en occident qui émerge dès la fin des années 1970. Selon John Breuilly, ce discours est symptomatique d'une évolution d'une politique consensuelle vers une politique de conflits plus marquée.[582] Le discours académique en général s'est également transformé avec la réémergence de grandes théories et de débats plus polarisés. Les manifestations du nationalisme qui ont suivi la chute de l'union soviétique doivent ainsi être reconsidérées à la lumière de cette perspective.

Le nationalisme a été une partie intégrante de la formation des sociétés et des États à l'est du rideau de fer ainsi que des mouvements d'oppositions et de dissidences tels que *Solidarność* en Pologne (quoique apparaissant sous la dénomination moins controversée de « patriotisme »). Néanmoins, le rideau de fer ne devrait pas être considéré comme une frontière informée par le nationalisme.[583] En effet, le nationalisme sous toutes ses formes a été un élément fondateur et partagé des États et des sociétés des deux côtés du « mur ». Les discours nationalistes à l'ouest ne se sont pas soudainement tus pour laisser ceux de l'est s'exprimer. Les sentiments et les discours nationalistes ont évolué vers ce qui pourrait être considéré comme une normalisation. Par conséquent, la réémergence du nationalisme en Europe centrale et orientale peut être considérée comme une mise à jour des discours sociopolitiques. Une poussée nourrie en partie par les idées et les sentiments contenus par la coercition étatique et l'approvisionnement soudain de pratiques établies dans les démocraties libérales.

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[582] Les personnalités politiques telles que Thatcher et Reagan représentent cette évolution.

[583] « Informée », c'est-à-dire dont la forme a subi l'influence, « de l'interieur », d'autres formes, en l'occurrence ici, celle du nationalisme. Considérant la définition qu'en donne Aristote, le terme de "forme" désigne ici détermination (ou structure) unifiante d'une substance. Cependant, nous ne l'envisageons pas de façon statique, mais associons le couple forme et matière à un autre couple de catégories d'Aristote, celui de l'acte et de la puissance.

Le nationalisme n'apparaît pas comme « une erreur morale », mais comme le tissu organisateur du monde moderne. Une étude critique du nationalisme induit un engagement politique sur les modalités d'organisation et de représentations des sociétés modernes. En reconnaissant le nationalisme comme un phénomène historique fondateur de la modernité, il nous faut reconnaître, dans le but d'élaborer une étude critique, notre propre nationalisme. Le premier pas d'une approche critique est l'autocritique. Umut Özkirimli écrit : « les nationalistes n'ont pas de pays ». Il aurait pu également écrire : « nous sommes tous nationalistes ».

Un des éléments cruciaux pour l'étude et la compréhension du nationalisme est la construction du passé. Les circonstances historiques qui ont défini les passés nationaux sont liées à la modernité de la forme nation. Selon Pierre Nora, une des caractéristiques qui définit la modernité est l'accélération de l'histoire. On peut formuler la problématique du nationalisme dans ce contexte comme suit : par quels moyens a-t-on produit et reproduit les passés nationaux ? La conceptualisation de l'histoire d'un point de vue nationaliste se fonde sur deux paradigmes. Le premier est le lien entre le présent d'une part et d'autre part les faits glorieux et le peuple du passé ; le second la conviction que la forme nationale contemporaine est l'achèvement logique de cette « glorieuse » généalogie.

Ces paradigmes suscitent la croyance en l'idée d'une nation déterminant l'ordre naturel et universel de la vie politique de l'humanité (Ernest Gellner). Même si cette croyance peut être sincère, elle n'explique aucunement le processus par lequel ces histoires nationales ont accompli leur destin assigné. La grande majorité des académiciens s'accordent à dire que le devenir national a été un processus de création. Nora suggère que l'accélération de l'histoire est la justification ontologique des « lieux de mémoires » qui répondent au sentiment de perte mémorielle induite par cette accélération. Par conséquent, sous la forme d'archives symboliques, s'est développée la nécessité d'un renforcement des identités. Cependant, les corps sociaux ont eu tendance, à travers les époques, à construire des murs symboliques ou idéologiques lorsqu'ils se percevaient en danger. Ce qui n'explique pas pour autant la production massive et homogène de lieux de mémoires au cours des XIXe et XXe

siècles. Comme le décrit l'historien Eric Hobsbawm, toutes ces traditions produites en masse l'ont été sous les auspices du nationalisme d'État

Lorsque l'on examine la constitution du passé national à partir de ces traditions créées à l'époque moderne, il faut prendre en compte deux niveaux d'analyse. Le premier est la structure (ou les moyens) par laquelle ces traditions sont signifiées ; le deuxième est le contenu signifiant diffusé à travers la (re)production de ces dernières. Aux questions que pouvaient se poser ceux qui décidaient de l'institution des lieux de mémoires, telles que « quelle culture et quel territoire ? », le nationalisme offrait des réponses qu'ils considéraient déjà comme évidentes, inclusives de toute autre alternative. Ainsi, les notions telles que « la terre des ancêtres » et « la culture héritée » (le contenu est secondaire dans un premier temps) ouvraient la voie à l'institution de lieux de mémoires pseudo-traditionnels. Les traditions nationales modernes innovent du point de vue de la quantité, de l'étendue et de l'homogénéité, et certainement de leur contenu. Mais l'innovation ne s'opère pas du point de vue de leur fonction sociale. Ces « nouvelles » traditions reproduisent la conception de l'histoire avec laquelle elles ont été produites, c'est-à-dire la conception des élites et des corps sociaux décisionnaires. Le nationalisme en général fournit les clefs pour comprendre le passé qu'il crée, et permet de choisir ce qui doit être érigé, représenté, commémoré. Mais le nationalisme en soi n'est lui-même qu'un mode de pensée, un mode d'appréhension du monde social-historique : ce sont les individus qui le (re)produisent (volontairement ou par *habitus*) qui en sont les agents.

Or les règles de la vision nationaliste du monde posent ensuite le problème du choix du contenu car, par définition, cette sélection n'offre qu'une version tronquée des réalités sociales qu'elle prétend représenter. La sélection culturelle et les transformations des significations sociales induites par le nationalisme furent implémentées par les couches sociales qui se considéraient comme « l'élite de la nation. » Nous pouvons les considérer comme les premiers « croyants. » L'objectif, ou plutôt le résultat escompté, était de remplir l'espace imaginaire entre le centre du pouvoir symbolique, idéalement l'État, avec le peuple reconnu par ce centre comme étant le sien. Les programmes scolaires, les commémorations nationales, les

monuments ainsi que les théories et discours politiques et sociaux – qu'ils soient machiavéliques ou de bonne foi, calculés ou naturalisés – apparaissent tous comme différents aspects de cet effort de remplir – ou de cacher – le vide problématique de l'espace imaginaire national.

L'expression « nationalisme banal », selon Billig, décrit la reproduction de l'imaginaire national dans les États-nations établis. Contrairement au « plébiscite de tous les jours » de Renan, le nationalisme banal est la reconnaissance insouciante de l'État-nation par ses membres. Le discours académique est également sujet à cette reproduction, par exemple à travers l'historiographie nationale (ce qui est quasiment une tautologie au cours du XXe siècle). L'attachement à ce discours, qui reflète un manque d'esprit critique des sciences sociales conventionnelles, a été critiqué par Beck. C'est ce qu'il appelle le nationalisme méthodologique. Mais se placer en dehors du cadre discursif du nationalisme n'est pas chose aisée. Il est cependant nécessaire de commencer à construire un cadre d'analyse qui permette une étude critique tout en évitant la simple reproduction du discours et de l'imaginaire nationalistes.

2. Le fil d'Ariane

Le deuxième chapitre explore ainsi les propriétés du discours en relation avec la notion d'imaginaire social dans le but de concevoir le champ de l'imaginaire comme champ d'investigation. Le chapitre explicite donc le mode de (re)production des significations imaginaires. Le fil du discours apparaît dès lors comme le fil d'Ariane qui permet de sortir du labyrinthe. Dans un premier temps, il s'agit d'expliciter les liens entre discours et imaginaire social à travers les signes, c'est-à-dire les représentations et les significations sociales. Il est ainsi question des stéréotypes (représentations figées) et des mythes selon l'analyse de Roland Barthes. Mais ces liens établis comme « différance » (Jacques Derrida), appellent une logique différente de celle des systèmes structuralistes. Elle se met alors en place sous la forme métaphorique de l'*Unitas multiplex* (Edgar Morin), qui est la conception du système ouvert. En termes mathématiques, ce système peut s'apparenter à une

fonction relativement simple qui, appliquée à la fabrique du sens social, permet de rendre compte de sa complexité (par analogie, comme en géométrie fractale).

La première partie de ce chapitre s'ouvre sur le concept de formation discursive qui met en avant la relation différentielle entre les unités du discours et les fonctions de ces unités. Cette relation, entre les signes et les énoncés, se présente sous la forme d'une tension fluide entre représentation et signification. Une représentation est fictivement fixée, mais elle peut potentiellement se référer à des significations indéterminées. Conjointement, une signification en contexte sera déterminée par un glissement lui-même inscrit dans la situation dans laquelle le signe est exprimé. En conséquence, un signe particulier peut faire référence à une série d'énoncés possibles (simultanément ou de façon indépendante), et les énoncés peuvent être déterminés par différents signes ou par différentes séries de signes. Les lieux de mémoire dont il est question dans le premier chapitre peuvent être caractérisés de cette façon. Les monuments aux morts de la grande guerre sont les premiers exemples de la commémoration institutionnalisée sous la forme de monuments dispersés à l'échelle nationale. On observe ici comment opère une formation discursive. La signification d'un monument aux morts particulier est, dans un premier temps, la composition de signes qui dirigent, à un autre niveau et dans un deuxième temps, la signification plus générale du monument comme commémoration nationale par la glorification de la localité.

Le processus des formations discursives mène à l'intériorisation des significations qu'elles portent. Ces dernières apparaissent alors comme naturelles et immédiates (littéralement *sans médiation*). Cet *habitus* de cadres de références et d'interprétations est composé d'histoires et de narrations, telles que celles racontées par les monuments aux morts. Ces cadres fournissent une grille de préconceptions qui permettent de rendre le monde social signifiant. Le stéréotype est la forme la plus simple de ces préconceptions. Et les stéréotypes, ou préjugés, sont parties prenantes des histoires dites et redites dans la reproduction des cadres sociaux de référence et d'interprétation. Ces histoires font aussi partie de la formation discursive du nationalisme.

Les stéréotypes nationaux, envers soi ou envers les Autres, agissent comme des processus de différentiation entre imaginaires sociaux. Ils font partie de la construction sociale de la réalité. Les images du soi-national sont contenues dans les stéréotypes qui représentent les Autres. Elles donnent à la nation un statut qui se veut unique, et par là même elles retirent aux autres nations la possibilité formelle de s'octroyer ce même statut. Ainsi, les stéréotypes peuvent être à la fois négatifs ou positifs. Au-delà de leur fonction d'économie (Walter Lippman), les stéréotypes peuvent aussi avoir une fonction pratique : ils représentent dans un sens le fait que « nous » connaissons quelque chose (au sujet) du monde dans lequel nous vivons. Poussés à leur limite, les stéréotypes se brisent face à la complexité de la réalité sociale qu'ils tendent à masquer. D'autre part, étant donné cette complexité, ils sont symptomatiques de la nécessité d'approches simplifiées qui permettent d'accéder à ces réalités. Cependant, ces associations essentialistes sont généralement considérées comme des fixités de première et de dernière instances. En d'autre terme, des identités. L'approche essentialiste du nationalisme réduit la complexité du tissu social de façon exclusive.

Pour rendre compte de la complexité du monde social, de la formation sociale des significations, les conceptions fermées apparaissent comme insuffisantes. La sémiologie structuraliste (telle que celle utilisée par Barthes dans son analyse des mythes) se fonde sur des objets fermés et amène à une causalité unidirectionnelle et linéaire entre les différents niveaux de sens. Pour éviter ceci, le système de production de significations sociales est considéré comme un système ouvert et dynamique (Morin). Cette formation ouverte du sens commun correspond à la « métaphoricité des métaphores » qu'élabore Paul Ricœur. L'aspect fictif des métaphores relate la façon dont les êtres humains font expérience de la réalité : puisque la réalité est fuyante, des éléments fictifs sont nécessaires pour l'organiser de façon narrative. C'est ce que Ricœur appelle la redescription, qui affine la notion d'identité : une métaphore n'est pas simplement la copie de ce à quoi elle se réfère, elle est aussi le transfert du même à l'Autre (dans le temps, dans la forme, etc.). En résumé, le tissu des significations sociales apparaît comme un système ouvert auto-

régulé, un « auto-éco-système », selon Morin, qui comprend le réseau, l'écheveau et les fils des significations sociales.

La deuxième partie du deuxième chapitre répond à la question de savoir ce qu'est l'imaginaire dominant. Bien qu'étant fonctionnellement un système ouvert, le jeu des significations subit l'influence des idéologies à travers des négociations du sens social que l'on peut considérer comme le filage et l'effilage du tissu social. Inspiré de la définition de la culture selon Morin, les termes de négociation ou de filage ont l'avantage de suggérer que l'activité humaine est au centre de ce système ouvert, au lieu de considérer l'être humain comme un reproducteur passif des significations culturelles dans lesquelles il ne serait que suspendu (comme le suggère la définition de la culture selon Max Weber). Cette négociation, comme elle est en partie démontrée à travers l'étendue et l'évolution du concept de culture depuis la fin du XIXe siècle, s'opère à travers des réductions, des rationalisations, des précisions et des redirections du sens des significations sociales. Par extension, l'idéologie nationaliste informe et forme l'imaginaire national qui est reproduit tant qu'il est reconnu (et considéré comme créateur/générateur de sens).

La reproduction n'étant jamais simple copie ou copie conforme, elle forme et informe en retour l'idéologie. Ainsi, cette reconnaissance s'opère dans la relation entre l'imaginaire institué et l'imaginaire instituant, laissant, du moins en théorie, un espace de création (imaginaire radical) que l'on peut considérer comme l'effilage et le retissage informés. L'imaginaire dominant semble opérer précisément de telle manière, en intégrant en partie les fils de résistance, de compétition, d'opposition, de divergence ou plus généralement de différence, dans le but de désintégrer leurs significations. Il en va de même pour l'imaginaire national qui offre des points d'accroche et de réduction à travers une histoire linéaire écrite, un territoire et une langue fixés comme nationaux.

Anderson parle de « communauté imaginée » pour décrire la nation, en précisant par extension que toute communauté est imaginée. Castoriadis définit l'imaginaire comme le champ du réel qui n'est pas tangible ni nécessairement conscient, mais qui est en relation dialectique avec le champ d'action des sociétés humaines. Il le définit,

lui donne un sens, l'institue. Dans les deux cas, nous avons une réhabilitation de l'imaginaire comme champ du réel et non comme fantasmagorie. Dans les deux cas, nous avons aussi une certaine notion de la « totalité » de l'imaginaire : toute institution est imaginaire et toute communauté est imaginée. Ceci renvoie aux définitions de la notion de culture que l'on peut trouver à l'époque où le débat ne s'articulait pas autour des notions de particularité et d'universalité, mais où il portait plutôt sur la distinction entre nature et culture. Une des premières définitions de la culture exprime cette conception : elle est un "complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." (Edward Tylor). Dans cette conception, la culture n'est pas explicitement différenciée de la politique ou de l'économie comme champs d'action séparés, puisque a priori, la question ne se pose pas. Au contraire, tout ce qui est de l'ordre de l'humain est culturel.

Une entité sociale est une puissance d'agir (Frédéric Lordon), c'est-à-dire qu'elle est à la fois productrice, réceptrice et reproductrice de significations et de représentations sociales. Autrement dit, le fournisseur, le tisserand et la machine à tisser (auto-eco-système). L'idéologie au sens littéral (ou philosophie) est ainsi considérée comme la conscience du processus de la (re)production des significations sociales. Ainsi, l'autonomie idéologique se traduit non seulement par la conscience de ce qui est intégré et tissé, mais encore par le choix conscient de l'ouverture/fermeture de la réception et de l'ouverture/fermeture de la (re)production (émission, promotion). L'autonomie est le potentiel conscient. L'hétéronomie est donc la restriction de ce potentiel par des puissances d'agir tierces (entités sociales ou institutions). L'imaginaire institué est l'imaginaire potentiel hétéronome, l'imaginaire instituant est l'imaginaire actuel (dynamique autonome/hétéronome), soit le retissage des éléments du premier. L'imaginaire radical apparaît ainsi comme sortant de l'imaginaire potentiel autonome.

Une représentation (signe) ne fait de sens que si ce dernier est social, c'est-à-dire, s'il est partagé par la reproduction reconnue (consciemment ou non) par deux puissances sociales. Le sens ainsi donné pointe vers la signification. Une signification est ainsi l'association, à travers le jeu des signes, de plusieurs sens. Une signification

dominante est cette association, car c'est elle qui, au moment contemporain, est au centre du processus de création/altération, d'intégration/désintégration des significations imaginaires et du lien qu'elles maintiennent ou perdent avec les signes/représentations. Ainsi, si l'on assigne à la signification de l'idée de nation, à partir du XIXe siècle, la définition de Gellner : « une doctrine politique qui considère que l'unité politique et l'unité nationale doivent être conformes », ou celle de Calhoun, « un État, un peuple », on peut comprendre en quoi elle est fondamentale. Car elle propulse une dynamique de dés/intégration d'une force inouïe : par l'association des signifactions qu'elle postule, elle devient déterminante autant pour définir ce qu'est l'unité politique – également comme institution (l'État) – que pour définir l'unité nationale, nommée par l'expression « le peuple ». Il va de soi que le potentiel totalitaire de cette association est particulièrement grand, étant donné la facilité formelle de se représenter son fil conducteur.

Ainsi, s'il est rationalisé à l'extrême, ce fil devient irrationnellement exclusif (dans le sens où l'auto-éco-système tend à ne devenir que système). À l'inverse, il a un potentiel totalitaire dans sa capacité à intégrer (associer) et donc à altérer pour se reproduire au-delà de la rationalité. Cette capacité va suffisamment loin, et elle est dorénavant capable de reprendre à son compte sa propre critique pour former comme un système de croyances qui, en dehors du paradigme nationaliste, ne feraient plus aucun sens (car demandant une autonomie accrue de déconstruction et de reconstruction des significations). Une autre formation culturelle a atteint un tel niveau d'altération et de reproduction « totalisatrice » : le capitalisme.

3. Filaments des Histoires Imaginaires Nationales

Le troisième chapitre présente les prémisses d'une histoire de l'institution de l'imaginaire national. Ce processus de formation des imaginaires nationaux ne considère pas simplement l'idée de nation en soi, mais bien la formation d'un imaginaire effectivement national, c'est-à-dire d'un imaginaire suffisamment reconnu socialement pour qu'il soit considéré de façon relationnelle (d'imaginaire instituant à imaginaire institué selon les termes de Castoriadis). L'histoire de l'idée

de nation relève de l'histoire de l'idéologie qui est en corrélation directe avec l'histoire de l'imaginaire. Il serait cependant réducteur de ne prendre en compte que l'évolution de l'idée car, s'il y a bel et bien un imaginaire national institué, l'idée de nation en est informée. Le chapitre commence par l'analyse des histoires nobiliaires qui, par opposition et par glissement des significations, vont former les histoires nationales.

Les significations imaginaires qui se sont mises en place pour composer ce qui deviendra le nationalisme en Grande-Bretagne (« Britishness ») peuvent être retracées au début de la période moderne. Ces significations ont évolué et se sont formées à travers des conditions historiques particulières à l'aire géopolitique qu'aujourd'hui nous appelons les Iles Britanniques. Dans le royaume d'Angleterre, la Réforme fut un long processus qui participa au changement cosmologique que l'on appelle la modernité. Par exemple, le principe théologique *sola scriptura* qui est un principe central de la théologie protestante a eu comme conséquence la dépréciation de certaines sources de pouvoir traditionnelles de l'Ancien Régime. Ainsi, le *cosmos* promu par la Réforme devient radicalement différent au fil du temps de l'ordre traditionnel qui établit le Saint-Siège comme l'autorité centrale à l'époque médiévale.

Le pouvoir du pape et les significations sociales associées ont donc diminué – perdu du sens – à mesure que se propageaient les significations liées à la Réforme. Les premières significations « laïques » de ce nouvel ordre furent institutionnalisées en 1648 grâce aux traités de la Paix de Westphalie. Celle-ci établit la reconnaissance de la souveraineté des États induisant de fait une redéfinition de la notion de souveraineté. Cette reconnaissance désintégra la signification du pouvoir papal (qui était la base de la reconnaissance de la royauté) en faveur des rois et des princes d'Europe. Une des premières conséquences de ce nouvel ordre fut l'émergence de la monarchie absolue, dans les États protestants comme dans les États catholiques, qui regroupe la représentation de l'État avec celle du monarque dans une seule série de significations.

Plus tard, aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles, cette notion de souveraineté sera redéfinie en faveur de l'idéologie libérale, dont la cosmologie est fondée de façon plus radicale, et donc plus englobante, sur l'individu (dans un premier temps au singulier). Ainsi, la notion de « peuple » qui lui sera associée ouvrira la voie à une nouvelle signification de l'imaginaire moderne. L'association des États modernes avec un nouveau discours de légitimité fondé sur la notion abstraite de peuple. Ceci deviendra le *patron* du nationalisme et le tissage de ces significations sera incarné par l'identification de peuples particuliers avec des États particuliers, en remplissant les espaces vides imaginaires et matériels entre les deux.

Les significations fondatrices d'imaginaires nationaux particuliers varient en fonction des différentes conditions géopolitiques et historiques. En Grande-Bretagne, c'est la monarchie puis l'entreprise coloniale qui pourvoiront successivement les fils élémentaires à ce qui deviendra la maille imaginaire de la « Britishness » au XIXe siècle. Le premier de ces éléments fut le résultat d'une conjoncture particulière qui, par le jeu des règles de successions entre les maisons royales d'Écosse et d'Angleterre, formalisa l'unification des couronnes plus d'un siècle avant le traité d'union de 1707. Entre temps, l'entreprise coloniale de l'Angleterre va prendre son essor – alors qu'elle sera un échec pour l'Écosse. Tous ces filaments ainsi que les intérêts des différentes élites vont se tisser de telle façon, pour que la notion d'Empire britannique permette – du moins pour un temps – l'adhésion des élites écossaises à l'imaginaire national britannique en gestation. On observe par la suite comment l'Empire, et l'entreprise coloniale qui y est associée, ont émaillé un imaginaire en le tissant aux intérêts mercantiles d'une certaine classe sociale – l'élite – avant que ne soit tissée la signification de « peuple » britannique. Même si servant formellement les intérêts de la nation, l'Empire apparaît avant tout comme l'élément qui légitime, dans un premier temps, la formation d'une élite économique commune.

Une autre série de significations qui ont également formé – et été informées par – ce devenir des imaginaires nationaux à travers l'Europe trouve son origine dans la montée du républicanisme (sous ses diverses formulations). Les idées républicaines, qui apparaissent à la Renaissance, sont fondées sur une doctrine relativement

simple : celle de l'opposition à l'idée que la monarchie soit la meilleure forme de gouvernement. Au cours du XVIIe siècle, les idées républicaines se répandent à travers la noblesse et la bourgeoisie des États européens. Sans prétendre à une analyse critique de la notion de républicanisme, nous pouvons néanmoins considérer que le républicanisme, selon les acceptions de la théorie politique moderne, est un entre-deux entre le libéralisme et ce que nous appellerons, faute de mieux, le « communautarisme.» Les idées et les doctrines républicaines sont un ensemble de différentes formes qui jonglent avec différentes conceptualisations de la notion de liberté, interprétée de façon libérale (par exemple, la liberté individuelle) ou de façon communautaire (par exemple, l'égalité politique). Nous considérons donc que le républicanisme est un des fondements épistémologique de l'imaginaire moderne radical.

En Angleterre, deux séries majeures d'événements ont été enclenchées par des idées républicaines : les deux révolutions anglaises. La première série d'événements, les guerres civiles de 1642-1646 et de 1649-1651, et la période du Commonwealth de 1649 à 1660, ont été influencées de manière dominante par les tendances communautaires. Au contraire, la révolution dite « glorieuse » de 1688, qui institua une monarchie constitutionnelle, entérina le succès des tendances libérales du républicanisme. Dans le royaume de France, les idées républicaines resteront à la marge pendant cette période. Ce n'est qu'après le long règne de Louis XV que l'imaginaire républicain commença son essor rapide. Des émergences républicaines apparaissaient alors à travers l'Europe et les rangs de la « République des Lettres » s'étoffaient, les yeux rivés sur le royaume de France. Quand les significations radicales de philosophes de cette « république » furent largement propagées, la période révolutionnaire qui s'ensuivit fut le théâtre de la rencontre des différentes tendances du républicanisme. La violence matérielle et symbolique de la Révolution est l'expression de cette rencontre qui définira l'éventail des doctrines politiques, souvent contradictoires, qui définiront toutes les idéologies de la modernité tardive. Malgré leurs différences, toutes ces significations radicales et les doctrines qui y sont associées pointaient vers le même changement de paradigme. Ainsi, au vu de sa signification transhistorique, la Révolution Française peut être considérée comme un

des moments sociaux-historiques qui ont fait basculer l'équilibre du pouvoir en faveur des significations radicales de la modernité. La Révolution était elle-même le résultat des écheveaux des institutions radicales qui contestaient, à travers toutes sortes de frontières, l'imaginaire institué de l'ordre divin.

Une des significations, au cœur de ce changement, qui s'est cristallisée à la fin du XVIIIe siècle, est celle de « peuple » : elle était alors devenue le symbole de la contestation de la cosmologie instituée du pouvoir. En résumé, le « droit des peuples » s'opposait à la « Loi de Dieu ». En pratique, elle s'exprimait dans la compétition des institutions modernes envers tous les niveaux de pouvoirs des anciens régimes à travers l'Europe. La contestation de l'imaginaire institué s'articulait autour du point majeur de l'incarnation de la légitimité du pouvoir. Alors que la représentation de Dieu fut systématiquement reléguée au niveau de la conscience personnelle, l'espace imaginaire laissé ainsi vacant put être investi par une autre représentation : celle des peuples. L'expression du nationalisme s'engouffra dans cette brèche.

Le pamphlet *Qu'est ce que le Tiers-Etat ?* d'Emmanuel Joseph Sieyès apparaît comme l'expression de ce réagencement radical. Fondé sur l'idée d'une loi commune, le pamphlet présente dans un premier temps comment les nobles et leurs privilèges constituent un différent « peuple » au sein de la « Grande Nation ». En terme légaux, Sièyes présente la loi comme elle est, (*de lege lata)*, démontrant que les privilèges des nobles empêchent d'unifier la nation sous une loi commune (*de lege ferenda)*. Inversement, la nation représente tout le monde, définie comme le corps de citoyens légalement égaux. Cette redéfinition libérale de la nation, qui la fait passer d'une communauté vague à une communauté liée par un contrat de reconnaissance mutuelle de droits, n'est pas une particularité française. D'un point de vue idéologique, la popularité de cette définition est l'expression des élites libérales cosmopolites européennes.

Sièyes décrit les éléments qui légitiment l'ordre traditionnel. Sa critique se fonde sur l'idée que l'ancienneté d'une loi ne la rend pas nécessairement juste. Néanmoins, il va employer l'histoire contre la noblesse. Il s'oppose ainsi aux droits de conquête

qui légitiment l'aristocratie des ordres nobles. Sièyes explique que ces droites remontent à la conquête de la Gaule par les tribus Germaniques, notamment les Francs. Selon lui, la noblesse originale a disparu ou s'est intégrée dans la noblesse franque. Par conséquent, cette « vraie » noblesse de la nation s'oppose à cette dernière. Dans un deuxième temps, une nouvelle noblesse a émergé du tiers-état et l'a divisé. Sièyes invite toutes ces différentes noblesses à revenir dans la nation. Pour ce faire, il démontre par une série de syllogismes sophistiqués en quoi la légitimité de l'ancienneté, bien qu'absurde, favorise en fait la nation. Ce passage du pamphlet est très important car il conclut le *reductio ad absurdo* de la revendication de la légitimité des nobles. Ainsi s'opère l'ouverture d'un espace imaginaire dans lequel une nouvelle légitimité peut prendre place. Cette rhétorique annonce le nouveau paradigme dont le but est la désintégration de l'imaginaire de l'Ancien Régime. La première signification de ce nouvel imaginaire est la « révélation » (ou l'éveil) de la nation à soi-même. Le nationalisme est ainsi exprimé dans sa forme la plus raffinée, c'est-à-dire la plus fine, en cela qu'elle va tisser son devenir, à savoir l'association d'un État à un peuple.

En Pologne, la continuité de l'histoire de la descendance des nobles se maintient et se nationalise, eu égard aux conditions historiques particulières d'un État polonais inexistant et d'une noblesse assujettie ou en exil. Alors que la ferveur révolutionnaire florissait en France, une partie de la noblesse et de la bourgeoisie polono-lithuanienne alliée au roi de Pologne tentait de réformer et de restaurer une forme autonome d'État face à l'effondrement et au démembrement de la République de Pologne-Lituanie. Ils étaient nourris des idéaux radicaux de la République des Lettres. Malgré leurs efforts, le roi abdiqua et l'État disparut. Il en résulta néanmoins, avec la Constitution du 3 mai 1791, l'un des plus grand symboles de l'histoire nationale de la future Pologne. Même Karl Marx exprima son admiration face à la radicalité de la première constitution écrite européenne. En dépit de son importance symbolique, cette tentative de réformer la « démocratie noble » en faveur d'un gouvernement mixte moderne s'acheva dans le démantèlement de l'État. C'est à la suite de ce démantèlement que le terme « polonais » changea de signification. D'une définition politique, qui faisait référence à la citoyenneté de

l’ancienne république (c’est-à-dire aux nobles, aux *Sarmates*), le terme prit un nouveau sens « ethnique » pour définir les communautés de langue polonaise en les distinguant des autres minorités au sein des empires qui avaient annexé les territoires de l’ancienne République. Selon la définition politique moderne, nous pouvons dire qu’il n’y avait alors plus de nation polonaise. Néanmoins, l’idée d’un État polonais indépendant, qui représenterait ce nouveau peuple distingué des autres par sa langue, allait faire son chemin. La formation de la République de Pologne en 1918 fut rendu possible par la formation, au long du XIXe siècle, d’une haute culture nationaliste polonaise.

Alors qu’un État polonais, au sens nationaliste, n’avait jamais existé, l’idée de la perte de la « Pologne éternelle » et de sa restauration future ont été le ferment du nationalisme polonais. Ainsi, malgré l’inexistence d’institutions étatiques, une culture nationale polonaise allait fleurir de la même façon qu’en France ou en Grande Bretagne. C’est au cours du XIXe siècle que les consciences nationales vont prendre forme à travers toute l’Europe et au-delà. Cet aspect de l’imaginaire instituant du nationalisme était perçu comme un éveil, lui-même traduisant une conception linéaire du temps. Inspirée des histoires de légitimité nobiliaire, cette conception a été recentrée sur la notion de peuple projetant des lignées dans un passé mythologique et lointain. Cette forme de simplification de l’histoire est au cœur de la légitimation des relations de pouvoir, qu’ils soient anciens ou modernes. Cependant, malgré cette simplicité, les contenus culturels et pratiques du cadre des nations modernes ne sont pas disponibles : ils seront produits, négociés et reproduits tout au long du XIXe et du XXe siècles. C’est ainsi que la descendance gauloise du peuple français se définit tout au long du XIXe siècle. Si elle débute dans son opposition à l'histoire franque germanique des nobles, cette ascendance est plus tard récupérée par Napoléon III avec la formation du mythe de Vercingétorix. Elle sera institutionnalisée sous la Troisième République, dans ce qui sera le premier livre d'histoire de l'Education nationale (le « Petit Lavisse », utilisé jusqu’aux années 1960 également dans les colonies), sous la fameuse formule « nos ancêtres les Gaulois. »

4. Sections contemporaines

Le quatrième et dernier chapitre présente l'analyse des discours contemporains sur le nationalisme. Après un chapitre présentant les grandes lignes du « long moment historique » de l'imaginaire national, celui-ci analyse dans le moment contemporain (2003-2010) les termes et les significations des discours des principaux représentants politiques dans leur promotion de « l'identité nationale ». Il apparaîtra que dans le sillage des discours de l'extrême droite qui détournent le relativisme culturel à partir des années 1990, les discours des politiciens dits « républicains » (ou *mainstream* en anglais), poursuivent une banalisation accrue de thèmes nationalistes. Cependant, cette banalisation s'opère dans une optique politique différente, qui est celle du néolibéralisme et non pas, à l'instar de l'extrême droite, dans une optique idéologiquement simpliste du nationalisme intégral. L'analyse du discours met ensuite en relation avec les discours politiciens ceux des formations sociales et groupements ultranationalistes. Le but de cette mise en parallèle est de décrypter, dans la mesure du possible, les relations entre ces différents types de discours nationalistes et de mettre en avant les termes variés de la négociation sociale contemporaine en faveur d'une réaction généralisée dont le nationalisme n'est qu'une facette.

La Pologne est largement perçue comme une des « nations catholiques » d'Europe, au même titre que l'Espagne ou l'Irlande, par exemple. La communauté catholique a certes été prédominante dans la Pologne d'après 1945, mais la composition historique des populations et des communautés religieuses des territoires polonais était bien plus diversifiée. L'importance hégémonique du Christianisme dans le monde européen fut la norme, depuis l'institution de l'Eglise de Rome jusqu'à celle d'une sécularisation plus généralisée au cours du XXe siècle (induisant un processus de désacralisation). La loi de séparation de l'Église et de l'État de 1905 en France apparait certainement comme le symbole de ce changement. Dès 1919, dans la nouvelle République de Pologne, des mesures constitutionnelles reconnaissaient les différentes minorités en leur octroyant une forme d'égalité politique, notamment à la plus grande minorité juive d'Europe qui s'était installée sur les territoires du Royaume de Pologne depuis le Moyen-âge.

Il serait donc trop simple de dater l'importance du Catholicisme (et du Christianisme en général) dans la formation de la nation polonaise contemporaine avant la formulation du nationalisme polonais. Le « sarmatisme » des nobles de la République de Pologne-Lituanie, ainsi que le messianisme romantique de la haute culture polonaise en exil ont certainement joué un rôle déterminant dans la formation d'une culture nationale polonaise centrée sur la religion. Cependant, la première formulation cohérente de la nation polonaise comme entité culturellement exclusive date de la première moitié du XXe siècle. Elle deviendra une quasi réalité sociale par la force de la tragédie de l'histoire dans la deuxième moitié du XXe siècle.

Une série d'événements, qui commencent avec le génocide des juifs perpétré par les nazis et la politique d'expulsion et de déplacement de populations après la guerre, laisseront une société polonaise qui, pour la première fois dans son histoire nationale, sera relativement homogène. Cette situation, associée à la mort de Staline, permit l'institution d'un « communisme national » à travers tous les pays satellites. Dans la République Populaire de Pologne, cette idéologie perpétuera de façon tragique l'homogénéisation de la société polonaise. Elle trouvera son dénouement dans la crise de 1968, au cours de laquelle la politique de purge antisioniste du Kremlin poussera, de fait, ce qui restait de la communauté juive (ironiquement majoritairement communiste, et donc laïque) à quitter leur pays.

Les conséquences de cette crise ont eu un impact très profond sur la société polonaise dont l'homogénéisation « ethnique » est une conséquence certes ironique et tragique, mais surtout conjoncturelle. Comme l'écrit l'historien Norman Davies, la crise de « Mars 1968 a sonné le désastre moral et intellectuel de la génération qui avait cru pouvoir contribuer à rendre le monde meilleur et remettre en cause les fondements du totalitarisme en projetant une version idéalisée du marxisme. » On observe alors la portée qu'avaient les idéologies laïques au sein de la classe éduquée de l'époque. L'échec de leur révision du communisme soviétique vers un communisme antitotalitaire déclenchera, à partir des années 1970, l'union des diverses forces dissidentes sous le couvert de l'Église. Le syndicat *Solidarność*

(« solidarité ») en sera l'héritier, et jouera, au cours des années 1980, un rôle essentiel dans la transition vers la sortie du communisme.

Cependant, la ligne d'opposition entre les dissidents « laïques » et les opposants « catholiques » réapparaîtra au grand jour dès 1989. À plusieurs occasions, la société civile de la Troisième République de Pologne (dont la constitution est laïque) se trouvera mise sous pression par les émergences issues d'un imaginaire catholique traditionnaliste. La dernière en date de ces émergences suivit la mort accidentelle du président Lech Kaczyński (issu du parti majoritaire de la droite catholique) et de 88 hauts responsables de l'État en avril 2010. Dans ce que certains ont appelé « une guerre de rue », la commémoration de la mort du président a occulté celle des autres disparus. Alors que la situation politique était exceptionnelle, des formulations violentes ont parcouru toute la société autour d'une croix érigée devant le palais présidentiel. La ligne d'opposition qu'exprimait cette émergence a été récupérée de façon opportuniste par les politiciens de la droite catholique dans le but de mettre à mal l'équipe de transition au pouvoir, elle-même issue de la droite libérale. En se plaçant sur un plan moral en promouvant l'idée que l'identité polonaise catholique est la vraie identité polonaise, ces discours risquaient d'envenimer la situation. Aux termes d'une âpre négociation, la croix put être déplacée et la « guerre de rue » prit fin. Cependant, cet épisode réactualise une ligne de démarcation qui traverse la société polonaise, et qui s'inscrit de façon plus durable dans l'histoire.

La question de la religion, dans les discours politiques contemporains à travers le monde, est devenue suffisamment importante pour que l'on puisse parler d'un retour du religieux. En France, ainsi qu'en Grande Bretagne, cette question est drapée d'Islamophobie ou d'Arabophobie (Etienne Balibar), bien avant les attentats terroristes du 11 septembre 2001 à New York. Dans une certaine mesure, l'Islamophobie a pris la place, dans les espaces imaginaires traditionnels, de l'antisémitisme et de l'anticommunisme. Dans les pays d'immigration ainsi que dans les anciens centres coloniaux, la question de la religion s'est trouvée associée à la question de l'immigration et l'Islam y occupe une place de choix. La laïcité stricte de l'État français prévient, du moins en théorie, toute démonstration ostentatoire de signes religieux, également pour les représentants de l'État. Le président de la

République française, Nicolas Sarkozy, a été, depuis son passage au ministère de l'Intérieur en 2002-2004, le héraut de « l'identité nationale. » Il a promu, à travers ses différentes fonctions, une vision « ethniciste » et une exclusivité culturelle de l'identité française traditionnellement associée aux formations d'extrême droite, ou aux « débordements » des jeunes démocraties de l'Est.

L'analyse des discours du président français, ainsi que des porte-paroles et des différents ministres issus de son parti, présentent une désintégration symbolique d'une partie de la population française : ceux qui sont identifiés comme étant *issus de l'immigration* (le terme actuel est plutôt : *issus de la diversité*) et ceux vivant dans les banlieues. Ainsi, ces discours suggèrent qu'être français signifie ne pas être issu de cette diversité et ne pas être marginalisé économiquement. On observe ainsi comment, dans les espaces ouverts par cette désintégration, s'opère une division symbolique de la société française directement inspirée des discours xénophobes et nationalistes de l'extrême droite.

En Grande-Bretagne, la question de la religion ainsi que le développement d'une société séculaire ont suivi des routes quelque peu différentes de celles que l'on a observées dans les formations républicaines en Pologne et en France. En tant que monarchie constitutionnelle, la première différence évidente est celle de la survivance de la monarchie, dont la signification politique a été progressivement reléguée à un niveau symbolique. Néanmoins, le chef de l'État, c'est-à-dire le monarque, est resté le chef de l'Église (et ce de façon continue depuis le XVIe siècle). On peut considérer qu'au vue de son rôle politique diminué, la relation du chef de l'État avec l'Église apparaît alors comme peu problématique. Cependant, cette association symbolique a également empêché le développement d'institutions politiques laïques telles qu'elles peuvent apparaître dans d'autres États.

Ce que l'on observe dans les discours politiques de hauts représentants de l'État, tels que l'ancien premier ministre Gordon Brown, fait écho aux discours analysés dans le cadre français (par exemple sur le thème de l'échec du système d'intégration). Ainsi, c'est une même rhétorique qui ouvre des espaces dans lesquels est reproduite la vision d'une identité nationale réduite et passée. Cependant, la question de

l'immigration est relativisée dans le cadre britannique (par rapport au cadre français), car l'unité nationale se trouve également mise à mal par les forces « sécessionnistes » régionales. Au-delà des différences, ce que l'on observe dans toutes ces différentes pratiques discursives pointe vers une même grille de signification : en se fondant sur l'ambivalence du sens de certaines significations – qui font certes partie de la formation discursive traditionnelle du nationalisme – ces pratiques ouvrent des espaces pour tenter de les refermer sur des significations sociales fixées et exclusives.

Toutes ces analyses confirment les cadres simplistes des imaginaires nationaux qui semblent incapables de s'adapter aux conjonctures sociales et historiques complexes. Dès que ces cadres se trouvent sous pression, la tendance générale est celle d'un repli autour de grilles de significations réactionnaires. Mais cette observation n'est peut-être pas très surprenante. En revanche, la manière dont la force réactionnaire s'intègre dans l'imaginaire dominant apparaît comme plus signifiante. Elle peut être interprétée comme le signe du déséquilibre critique de l'imaginaire de la modernité tardive. Le sociologue Ulrich Beck considère que nous sommes en effet entrés dans la modernité « réflexive », et que cette modernité arrivée à maturité nous pousse vers un changement de paradigme. Selon lui, ce changement ne nous donne pas d'autre choix (il faut entendre : pas d'autre choix *progressiste*) que le dépassement réfléchi des dualités (ou binarités) modernes. Une de ces dualités, que Beck décrit comme des « habitudes mentales modernes », est l'opposition entre le Soi et l'Autre – ce qui est observé de façon évidente dans le nationalisme.

La conceptualisation de l'hybridité culturelle, qui reste très discutée, est perçue comme portant en elle le germe d'un dépassement des dualités. D'autres termes associés à cette conceptualisation – bricolage, métissage, créolisation – ont tous cette particularité de pointer vers l'ouverture d'espaces pluriels (à opposer à l'unidimensionnalité de l'homme moderne). La discussion des théories de l'hybridité culturelle et du cosmopolitanisme nous amène à reconsidérer l'importance de la notion de classe sociale dans le contexte des relations de pouvoir qu'expriment les expressions et les significations culturelles. Ceci suggère

également que la « cristallisation » des représentations des significations imaginaires fait partie du processus de l'évolution culturelle (ce qui renvoie à l'analyse des stéréotypes présente dans le deuxième chapitre). Ainsi, il apparaît dans le cas du nationalisme, que ce dernier a évolué d'un imaginaire radical, lui-même le résultat d'une série de déconstructions puis de reconstructions (autrement dit, d'un bricolage), pour finalement recristalliser un cadre de représentations sociales binaires entre lesquelles s'effectue le processus d'institution des significations sociales modernes en tension (ou en contradiction selon Rudolf Rucker) avec l'expérience quotidienne de la vie sociale.

Conclusion

La première des questions qui ont introduit cette étude concernait le *mode* avec lequel le nationalisme – considéré comme un imaginaire social – était reproduit au sein des sociétés contemporaines européennes. Le nationalisme apparaît en effet de façon évidente comme une des caractéristiques fondamentales des imaginaires sociaux européens – en Europe, mais également comme le ferment d'une société globale encore embryonnaire. Le nationalisme ne peut cependant pas se réduire au compte rendu des différents nationalismes particuliers. Indépendamment de la perspective que l'on prend pour étudier le nationalisme, ce dernier nous informe sur l'organisation rationaliste du monde, synthétisant une complexité globale au-delà de notre entendement, mais cependant peut-être accessible par un certain imaginaire. Le nationalisme, comme doctrine politique ou une série de croyances partagées, tend à masquer et à s'opposer à la réalité transculturelle et encore désordonnée de notre monde postcolonial et post-guerre froide.

Ce que l'on observe au niveau des discours politique – à travers une renationalisation des discours politiques – est le rejet des termes et la réduction des significations qui permettent de rendre compte de la complexité du monde social-historique, particulièrement lorsque ce monde est en transition. La portée des négociations des significations imaginaires a ainsi été réduite dans le champ politique aux questions relevant de ce que l'on appelle en anglais *identity politics*. Il

se peut que cette tendance commence à s'inverser après la série des crises financières commencée en 2008, et que de nouvelles formulations (ainsi que des formulations, remises à jour, d'anciens termes de contestation, comme ceux empruntés au marxisme) remettent en cause la grille de significations binaires et réactionnaires que les néolibéraux ont soutenu – par inconscience parfois – dans leur conquête du pouvoir. De même, le spectacle qu'ont offert au cours des dernières décennies les questions culturelles (le « clash » des civilisations par exemple) a également nourri l'alignement des positions de négociations des significations sociales, et a donc brouillé les lignes de démarcations politiques.

À l'aube du XXIe siècle, le nationalisme européen apparaît de façon dominante comme nationalisme d'État, et ne peut en conséquence être porteur de significations progressistes s'opposant aux institutions dominantes (comme cela a été le cas dans les luttes contres les « anciens régimes » d'Europe ou à travers les libérations coloniales). Les termes du nationalisme ont ainsi évolué à partir de significations radicales, pour devenir des continuums de représentations. Cette linéarité a permis la promotion et l'imposition – ainsi que l'acceptation plus ou moins consciente – d'imaginaires sociaux homogénéisants autour d'institutions étatiques centralisatrices (qu'elles soient réelles ou projetées). Cependant, les différentes crises qui traversent le globe, la stagnation (ou pis) de l'Union Européenne ainsi que le cadre encore inévitable du nationalisme, inspirent un sentiment de mécontentement qui, bien qu'éveillant les démons de la réaction, peut également motiver la recherche de nouveaux imaginaires et de nouvelles institutions. Dans cet horizon, une perspective possible pourrait se définir par l'institution imaginaire de la complexité. Celle-ci, pour être culturelle au sens plein du terme, devra être une *praxis* des puissances d'agir conscientes d'elles-mêmes et réciproquement responsables – que ces individus fassent partie des élites ou des multitudes.